



box office poison

by Alex Robinson

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For Kristen...the best.



PROLOGUE

I'M JANE PEKAR
AND I FIND MYSELF
POWERFULLY ATTRACTED
TO A MAN IN A
DRESS.



I'M SHERMAN
DAVIES AND A
PHONE CALL RUINS
MY LIFE.



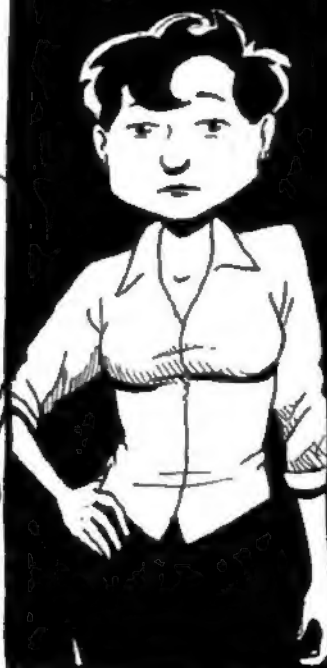
I'M IRVING FLAVOR
AND I WEAR FOUR
DIFFERENT TOUPEES
THROUGHOUT THE
BOOK.



I'M ED VELASQUEZ
AND I AM BETRAYED
-- TWICE IN ONE
DAY.



I'M DOROTHY
LESTRADE AND I'M
NOT THE BAD
GUY.

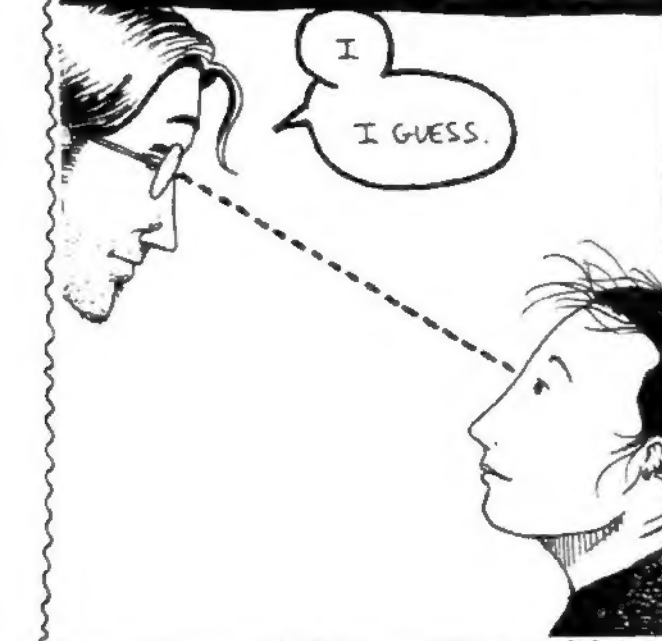


I'M STEPHEN GADEL
AND YOU GET TO SEE
ME NAKED MORE THAN
YOU PROBABLY LIKE.



I'M HILDY
KIERKEGAARD AND
I BECOME MORE
IMPORTANT IN THE
END.





The Bohemian Girl!



3

HI,
MY NAME'S
STEPHEN.

YOU'RE
HERE ABOUT
THE ROOM?



Uh.

Yeah.

GREAT! GREAT!
WELL, I'M ALREADY
LATE, SO JANE HERE WILL
HAVE THE HONOR OF
SHOWING YOU THE
PLACE, RIGHT?

SURE.

PLEASSED
TO MEET YOU
HERMAN.

WELL, I
HOPE YOU
LIKE IT,
SEE YA!



UH, IT'S SHERMAN, ACTUALLY.

OH, SORRY! SO WHAT DO YOU DO, SHERMAN?

WELL, FOR NOW I WORK IN A BOOKSTORE, BUT I WANT TO BE A WRITER.

A WRITER?! THAT'S GREAT!



OUR LAST ROOMMATE WAS A WRITER BUT WE... SHE HAD TO LEAVE.

THIS IS THE KITCHEN.



WOW! SO WHAT KIND OF STUFF DO YOU WRITE? STORIES?



UH, SOMETIMES. ACTUALLY, I MOSTLY WRITE -- I DON'T KNOW -- LIKE JOURNAL, OP-ED KIND OF STUFF.

COULD I READ SOME OF IT SOMETIME?

SURE! I'LL TRY TO BRING SOME TO CLASS.



I WOULD LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.

SO, DO YOU
LIVE IN THE
DORMS TOO?

NO, LAST SEMESTER WE --
MY FRIEND ZOOEY AND I -- GOT
A PLACE DOWN ON AVENUE
"A" AND 12th STREET.

REALLY? MY
FRIEND GLEN
LIVES ON
12th AND "B".

OR IS
IT 13th
AND "B"?

TAP
TAP
TAP

WOW, WELL
IF YOU'RE EVER
IN THE NEIGH-
BORHOOD STOP
ON BY!

YEAH, LIVING
IN THE DORMS
IS A PAIN IN
THE ASS.

PLUS THEY'RE
CLOSED DURING THE
SUMMER, SO I HAVE
TO GO LIVE WITH
MY AUNT PHIN
EVERY...

OH!! THAT REMINDS ME!!

DO YOU LIKE
LAUREL AND HARDY?

Uh. "WHO'S..
W-WHO'S ON FIRST"
RIGHT?

NO, YOU
UNCULTURED
BOY!

YOU
KNOW...

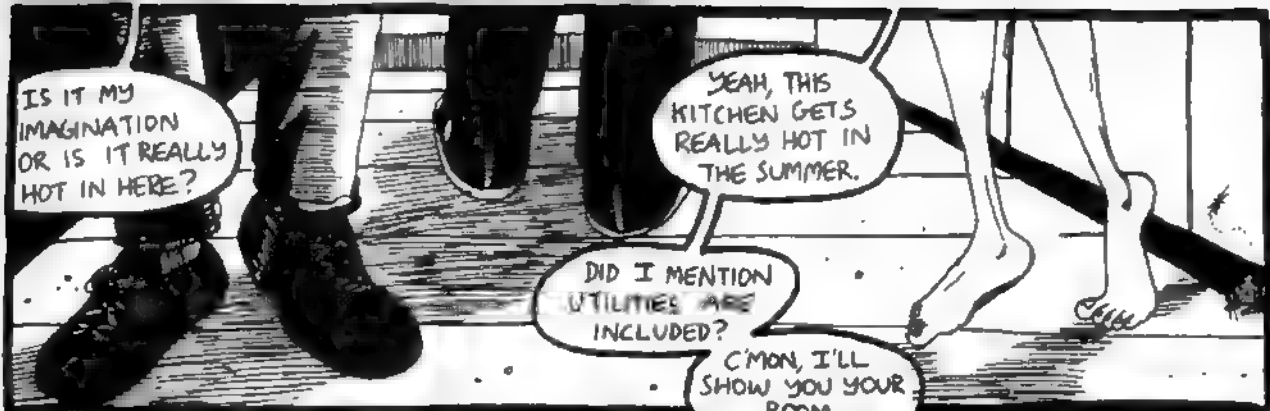
"HERE'S
ANOTHER NICE
MESS YOU'VE GOTTEN
ME IN TO"...

OH
YEAH!

Heh.

UCK

ANYWAY
NEXT MONTH THEY'RE
HAVING A LAUREL
AND HARDY FESTIVAL
AT THE UNION,
SO... DO YOU
WANT TO...





Y'KNOW... I NEVER
WOULD'VE GUESSED,
SHERM.

I NEVER WOULD'VE
THOUGHT YOU WERE
A...

Y'KNOW,
THAT YOU'D
NEVER

"WELL I
PRACTICE ALOT
WHEN I'M ALONE."

Hmm?

HA
HA!

BESIDES,
YOU WERENT
SO BAD YOUR-
SELF, SAL.

I REALLY ENJOYED
THAT "SONS OF THE
DESERT" MOVIE,
TOO.

MMM. WELL I SAW
TAKING YOU TO THAT
AS MY CIVIC DUTY

THE FACT
THAT YOU COULD
BE A SENIOR AT
COLLEGE...

HAVING
NEVER SEEN
A LAUREL AND
HARDY MOVIE...

IS AS DAMNING
AN INDICTMENT
AS I CAN IMAGINE
OF THE PUBLIC
SCHOOL
SYSTEM...

I CAN'T HELP IT, SAL.
I GREW UP IN NEW
JERSEY, WE...UM...WE
DIDN'T HAVE FILM
REVIVALS AT.

AT...Gulp's
AT THE
MALL

MMM...

SPEAKING
OF REVIVALS

SHERMAN

CAN'T
WE REST
FOR
AWHILE

I'M
GONNA
HAVE A
HEART
ATTACK!



HAVE YOU EVER MET
A CHICK YOU WOULD
KICK OUT OF BED?

HMM. LET
ME THINK
OH YEAH! YOUR
MOM!

YOU OKAY JAMES?
I DON'T WANT YOU TO
STRAIN YOURSELF
OR ANYTHING.

MEOW.

SORRY, BUT AFTER
HAULING UP TWO HUNDRED
BOXES OF BOOKS I HAD
TO CHECK OUT THIS
PRECIOUS CARGO.

ALL THESE BOOKS!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL
STAY AT WORK.

OKAY, DICKWEED,
THE VAN'S EMPTY. I LEFT
THE REST OF YOUR CRAP
IN THE HALLWAY
DOWNSTAIRS.

I'M
GONNA GET
OUTTA HERE.

1,137 OF
THEM. "THEY'RE
MY WIFE AND
THEY'RE MY
LIFE."

IT'S BECAUSE I'M
FAT. GIRLS DON'T
LIKE FATSOS.

UGH!
LOOKIT THIS!
BLURB

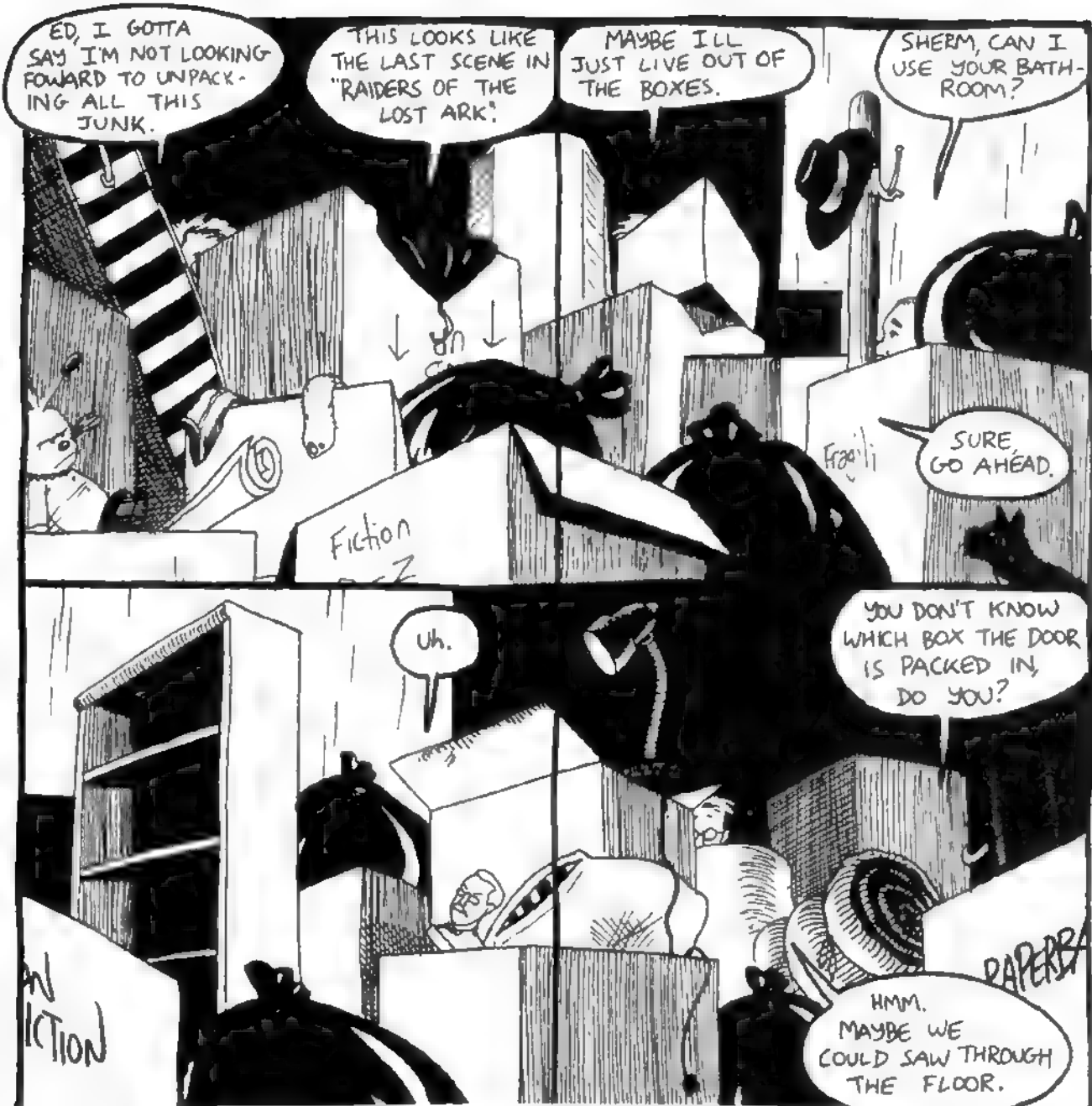
THANKS, JOE I GUESS
I'LL SEE YOU AT PHIN'S
ON TUESDAY, RIGHT?

SEE YA
THANKS

Wheew! OKAY,
BREAK TIME
WHO NEEDS
A BEER?

*FAT SQUEEZING SOUND





WELL, YOU DESERVE IT, MY LITTLE BANANA FISH.

OOOH, YOU BIG SWEETIE!

OKAY! OKAY! NOW CLOSE YOUR EYES AND I'LL GIVE YOU MY ANNIVERSARY PRESENT!

MMM. THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN TO INVOLVE REDI-WHIP™ AND A CATHOLIC SCHOOL-GIRL UNIFORM, DOES IT?

OKAY, READY, LOOK!

TA-DAH!

A BROCHURE ABOUT EUROPE! IT'S JUST MY SIZE, TOO!

NO, YA DOPE, WE'RE GOING TO EUROPE FOR THE SUMMER!

SURPRISE!

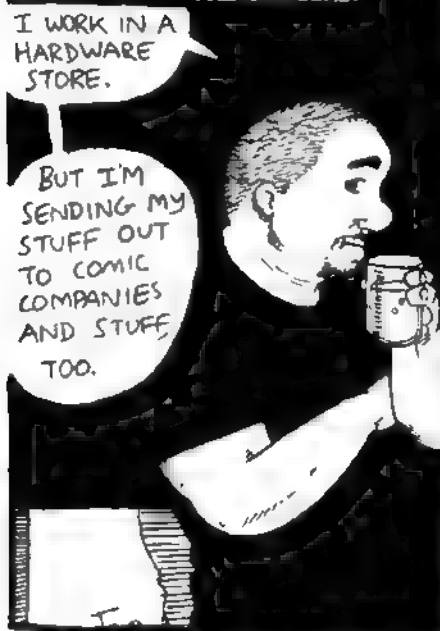
COME AND SEE

EUROPE

EUR--SAL, I CAN'T AFFORD THIS, I'VE GOT \$35,000 IN LOANS TO PAY OFF!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY FOR IT! I'M GONNA ASK MY PARENTS AND THEY'RE GONNA PAY!

WHAT?







OH, HE KNEW, HE JUST.. HAD TO WORK EARLY TOMORROW.

YEAH, I WORKED AT THE SAME BOOKSTORE AS YOU, ABOUT... CHRIST! TEN YEARS AGO! HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?

LET'S SEE, I STARTED IN MY SOPHOMORE YEAR, SO THAT'S ABOUT THREE, THREE AND A HALF YEARS.





THANKS.

YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.

HOW CAN YOU EVEN WORK AT A PLACE THAT WOULD MAKE YOU CUT YOUR HAIR AS PART OF SOME "DRESS CODE"?



I GUESS IT'S THIS WEIRD OBSESSION OF MINE ABOUT HAVING MONEY TO BUY FOOD AND THINGS.

YEAH, BUT YOU'RE BARELY MAKING MINIMUM WAGE.

YOU SHOULD QUIT. ALL YOU EVER DO IS COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW SHITTY IT IS.



GREAT ADVICE FROM SOMEONE WHO'S NEVER HAD TO WORK A DAY IN HER LIFE.

FUCK YOU! I'VE WORKED!



THAT'S RIGHT, I FORGOT ABOUT THOSE INFAMOUS THREE DAYS AT "MOONBEAM'S GRANOLA AND TOFU HUT."

WHY DID YOU QUIT AGAIN? OH YEAH!

"IT SUCKED."



WELL, SORRY, SAL,
WE CAN'T ALL JUST RUN
BACK TO MOMMY AND DADDY
WHEN LIFE ISN'T ALL ROSEY
AND WE NEED MORE
ALLOWANCE.

SOME OF
US HAVE TO
HAVE **SOME** SENSE
OF RESPONSIBILITY.

SO I'D
APPRECIATE
IT IF YOU'D
MIND YOUR OWN
BUSINESS.

YOU...

YOU'RE
SO
MEAN



I
KNOW

SORRY, HON,
I PROMISED CATTON
I'D HELP HIM WITH
HIS THESIS.

WHAT?!
I WAS HOPING
WE COULD HAVE A
NIGHT ALONE--

I KNOW!
I KNOW!

BUT
ONCE THIS
SUMMER SESSION
IS OVER, I'LL
GIVE YOU MY
UNDIVIDED
ATTENTION!

OH, YOU ARE
YOUR GEN
SPIRIT!

IF
I



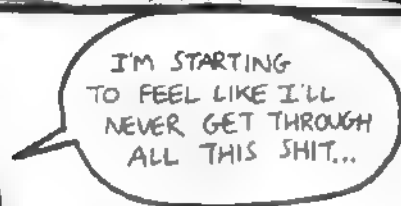
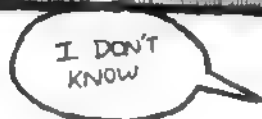




KNOCK,
KNOCK.



SHERMAN?



I RENTED
A MOVIE. D'YA
WANNA JOIN
ME?

WHAT
IS IT.

"THE BOHEMIAN
GIRL"

...?

WHAT'S
IT
ABOUT?

IT'S A
LAUREL AND
HARDY MOVIE.

REALLY?!

I
LOVE LAUREL
AND HARDY!

WOW,
ME, TOO!



SALLY?

SHERMAN

WHAT'S
WRONG WITH
YOUR HAIR?

NOTHING
EVERYTHING WILL
BE OKAY.

I'M
SORRY I
HAD TO GO

THAT
BUZZING ..

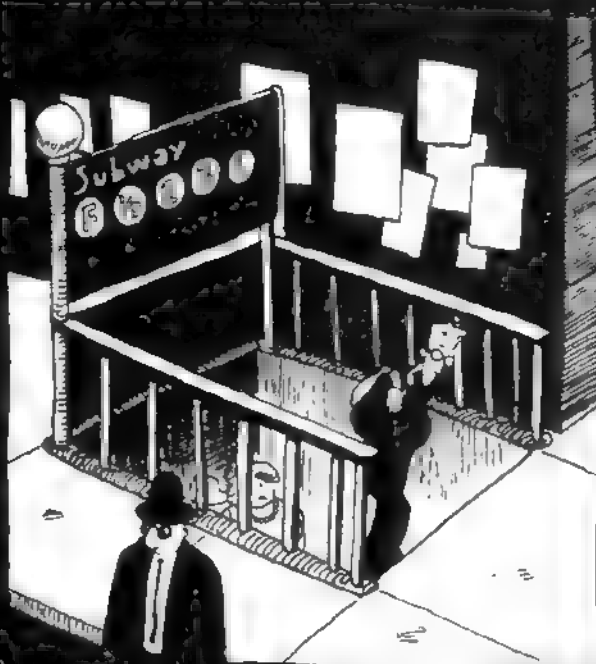
I'LL
ALWAYS BE
WITH YOU

THAT
NOISE?!

WHAT'S
WRONG?

WHYRE
YOU STOP-
PING?

WHAT
THE FUCK
IS THAT
BUZZING?!



Boiling Frog









HMM NOW WHY DID I COME DOWN ...?



HEY, SHERMAN!



HEY, JAMES HOW'S IT GOING?



YOU HEAR ABOUT JANICE'S BOYFRIEND?



YEAH. I WONDER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE?



I BET HE'S REAL UGLY.

CUTE GIRLS ALWAYS HAVE UGLY BOYFRIENDS



YOU'RE A BITTER GUY, JAMES, BUT I HAVE MORE FAITH IN JANICE THAN THAT.

WE'LL SEE ...



OH YEAH! DO YOU HAVE PLANS FOR THIS FRIDAY?

NO, WHY?



WELL, MY ROOMMATES ARE GOING AWAY FOR THE WEEKEND SO I'M GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE HOUSE WARMING.

SURE, WILL THERE BE ANY GIRLS?

I'M WORKING ON IT, I'M WORKING ON IT.





NOPE

I
QUIT.

WHAT?!

WELL, THE DRAGON HAD CALLED
ME TO THE CARPET YET AGAIN.
SHE WAS RANTING ABOUT MY
SLOVENLY APPEARANCE AND

AND YOU
WERE TWENTY-FIVE
MINUTES LATE, THAT'S
THE SAME AS
STEALING.

I'M GIVING YOU
A WRITTEN WARNING

IN OTHER
WORDS, NEXT TIME
WE HAVE A PROBLEM
WE'LL HAVE TO LET
YOU GO.

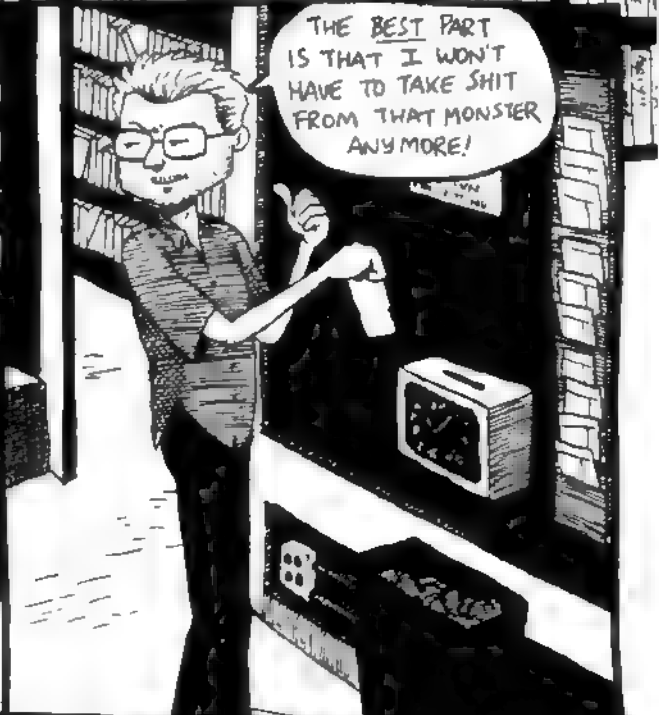
UNDERSTAND?

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND,
JAMES?

NELLIE?

FUCK

OFF







DO YOU CARRY
NON-FICTION
BOOKS?

CAN I USE
A XEROX MACHINE
TO COPY A FEW
PAGES?

I DON'T
WANT TO
HAVE TO BUY
THE BOOK.

I COULDN'T
FIND ANY BOOKS ON
LIONS IN THE PETS
SECTION.

DO YOU WORK
HERE?

CAN I
USE MY
LIBRARY
CARD?

UH... DO YOU... UH... DO
YOU HAVE BOOKS ON
HOW TO HYPNOTIZE
GIRLS?

DO YOU HAVE
ANY BOOKS ON
BUILDING A SIMPLE
ROBOT?

WHERE ARE BOOKS
BY SHERLOCK HOLMES?

DO YOU HAVE
ANY BOOKS ON
HOW TO FILL OUT
MONEY ORDERS?

UH.. HEH, DO YOU HAVE ANY
BOOKS ABOUT, LIKE, HERBS?

LET ME
GUESS:
MARIJUANA.

WHOA-HO-HO!
HOW DID YOU
GUESS
THAT?

DO YOU HAVE "FINDING-
AN ANGEL FOR YOUR
CO-DEPENDENT INNER
CHILD"?

IT'S A
PAPERBACK
ABOUT 120
PAGES.

DO YOU WORK HERE? DO YOU
WORK HERE? CAN I AXE YOU
SOMETHING? DO YOU WORK HERE?

Heh!

WHAT DO YOU
MEAN "WE DON'T
CARRY SOMETHING
CALLED BOX OFFICE
POISON"???

FOOLS!!
I'LL BE
FAMOUS!!!

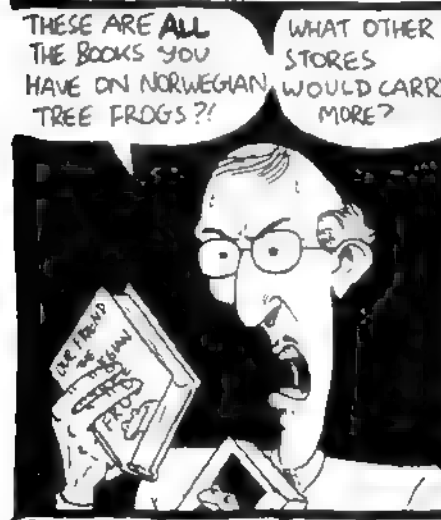
(ALL QUESTIONS 100% GENUINE!!!)



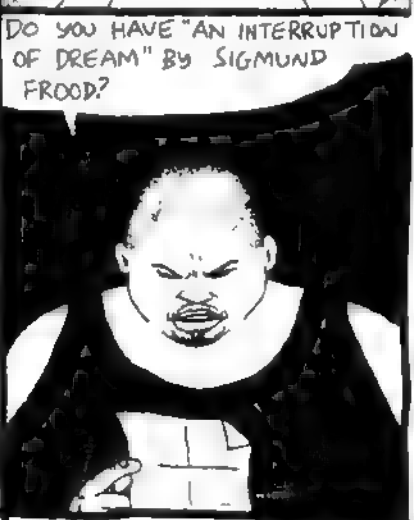
IT HAS A YELLOW COVER.



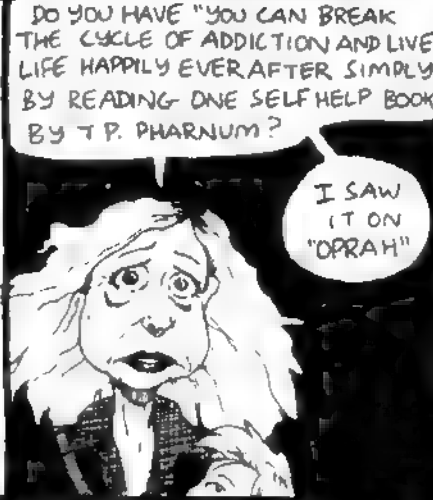
IT'S A GIFT FOR MY HUSBAND.



WHAT OTHER STORES WOULD CARRY MORE?



SHE'S EIGHTY FIVE.



I SAW IT ON "OPRAH"



I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO LOOK FOR THEM.



WARNING: THE BIGGER THE FRAMES, THE SMALLER THE BRAIN!







I'M SURE YOU'VE
HEARD THAT WE HAD TO
LET JAMES GO...

WHAT?!

...SO I'M
ASSIGNING YOU TO
TAKE CARE OF ALL
OF HIS SECTIONS.

JUST ME? B-BUT
THAT'S-- MY WORK-
LOAD WILL BE
DOUBLED!!

WELL, I'M REALLY SORRY
IT'LL BE CUTTING IN TO YOUR
SOCIAL HOUR, BUT WE CAN'T
AFFORD TO HIRE A
NEW CLERK.

I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND
THIS'S BEEN A SLOW SEASON
FOR ALL RETAIL JOBS. WE
ALL WILL JUST HAVE TO
TIGHTEN OUR BELTS
A BIT.

I'D LIKE TO
TIGHTEN MY
BELT AROUND
YOUR GOD DAMNED
STUPID LYING
NECK! I
QUIT!!

Uh-Huh.

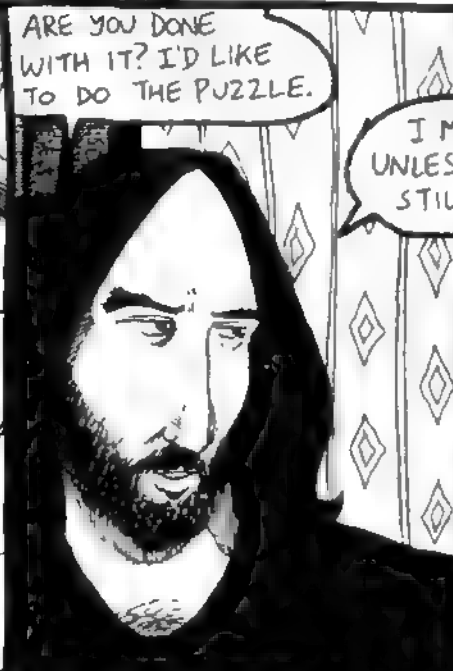
NOW YOU'LL BE
ABLE TO 'CUZ
I QUIT!!

SO UNLESS YOU
HAVE ANYTHING ELSE
TO SAY...?

I
QUIT

NO







*Ballad
of
Jane
and
Stephen*



I GUESS I
WAS WHAT YOU'D
CALL A LATE
BLOOMER

I HAD FRIENDS
IN HIGH SCHOOL,
BUT I NEVER WENT
ON DATES OR
ANYTHING.

ART SCHOOL
WAS DIFFERENT.
I WAS THE ONLY
GIRL IN THE WHOLE
CARTOONING
DEPARTMENT.

THE FIRST GUY I EVER WENT
OUT WITH WAS RUFUS KONIGS-
BERG, A MEDIA ARTS MAJOR.
AFTER A FEW DATES WE
BOTH DECIDED TO "JUST BE
FRIENDS" AND WE ACTUALLY
WERE, TOO.

THE SECOND GUY I WENT OUT
WITH WAS HUNT STRATHMORE,
A CARTOONIST. WE ONLY WENT
OUT ONCE.

WE WENT AND SAW "BATMAN"
AND OVER DINNER HE ASKED ME
WHO I THOUGHT WAS STRONGER:
THE HULK OR SUPERMAN?

AND--ALTHOUGH I HADN'T
PLANNED ON IT-- A LOUSY
FIRST KISS.

IT WAS
ALL HE TALK-
ED ABOUT. HE WAS
OBSESSED WITH
SUPER-HERO COMICS!

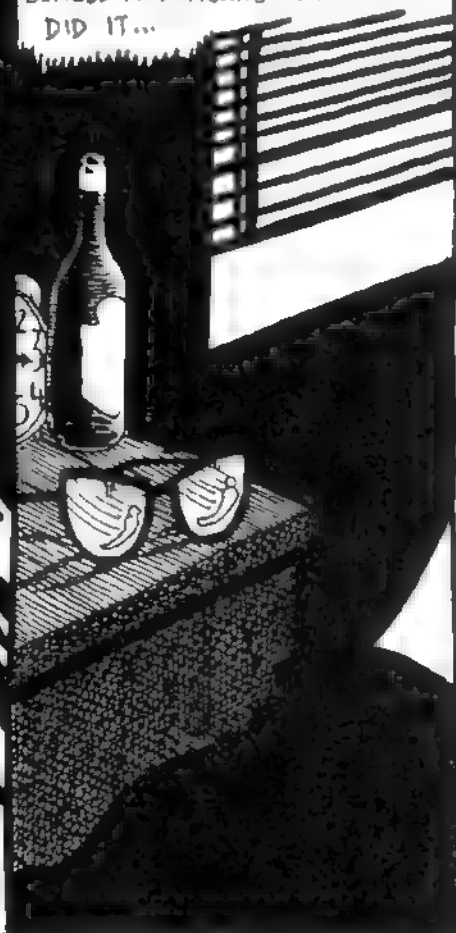
I DECIDED TO
THROW MYSELF
IN TO MY WORK



DURING MY SOPHMORE
YEAR, MY OLDER SISTER
KIM GOT MARRIED, THE
SECOND PEKAR SISTER
TO DO SO.



ONE NIGHT THAT YEAR, RUFUS
AND I WERE DRINKING AND
LONELY AND HORNY AND WE
DID IT...



IT WAS BREATH TAKINGLY
PERFUNCTORY.



THEN THERE WAS "DUKE," A
PAINTER AND MY UNREQUITED
OBSESSION. I WORKED MYSELF
UP TO ASK HIM OUT AND HE
WORKED HIMSELF UP TO TELL
ME HE WAS BUSY.



MY FIRST REAL "BOYFRIEND" WAS
ACTUALLY ANOTHER CARTOONIST.
MICHAEL HAD AN ENORMOUS IMPACT
ON MY WORK, TOO. HE LEAD ME
AWAY FROM ELVES AND FANTASY
STUFF TO MORE REALISTIC
STORIES



AND THE
SEX WAS
AMAZING
...

WHEN MICHAEL TRANSFERRED TO
ANOTHER SCHOOL WE BOTH AGREED
IT WOULD BE FOR THE BEST TO
BREAK UP

THAT SUMMER, MY NEXT
OLDEST SISTER JOYCE
TIED THE KNOT. THREE
DAUGHTERS DOWN, TWO
TO GO.



HALLOWEEN OF MY JUNIOR YEAR,
RUFUS HAD A PARTY. MY ROOM-
MATE JEOPARDY DIRECTED MY
ATTENTION ACROSS THE ROOM TO
SOME GUY--A CROSS BETWEEN
JESUS CHRIST AND PAUL BUNYAN
--IN A DRESS!



THE UNDERTOW OF HIS PRESENCE
DRAGGED ME THROUGH THE
SEA OF MASKS...



I LISTENED AS HE DEBATED
SOME KID ABOUT-- OF ALL THINGS
--ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ATTITUDES
TOWARDS BLACKS AND SLAVERY.



I JUST LISTENED TO HIM
TALK, TO HIS VOICE. I WASN'T
MUCH OF A HISTORY BUFF
BUT HE MADE IT SOUND SO
... EXCITING, SO VITAL.

HE HAD A PASSION
THAT I FOUND VERY--



UM, HI.

MISS
OYL, I
PRESUME?

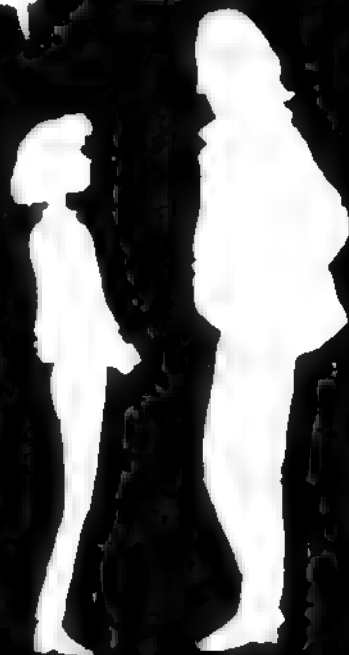
Heh

YOU IDIOT!! I LATER LEARNED
FROM RUFUS THAT THE JESUS
GUY-- WHOSE NAME WAS-- IS
STEPHEN GADEL-- THOUGHT
I WAS "REALLY CUTE BUT
SEEMED STUCK UP"



EVENTUALLY, IN A PAINFULLY HIGH SCHOOLISH WAY, RUFUS PLAYED MATCHMAKER AND THERE WE WERE... OUT FOR DINNER AND A MOVIE.

H'LO
HI



IT WAS
AWFUL.



MAYBE WE WERE BOTH NERVOUS OR WHATEVER BUT HE SEEMED LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON. AWKWARD SILENCES WERE THE RULE OF THE NIGHT.



I IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN TWO WEEKS LATER HE CALLS ME.

SURE.
IN THE AFTERNOON?

UH-HA, OKAY!



IT WAS GREAT. WE JUST WALKED AROUND THE VILLAGE, GOT A BITE TO EAT AND CHATTED UP A STORM. WE EVEN WENT BOWLING!



BEFORE WE PARTED, STEPHEN EXPLAINED IT ALL TO ME. HE WAS IN ONE LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP MOST OF HIS ADULT LIFE-- HE WAS TWENTY SEVEN-- AND IT ENDED ABOUT A YEAR AGO.



I WAS THE FIRST GIRL HE'D GONE OUT WITH SINCE THEN THAT'S WHY HE WAS SO NERVOUS ON OUR 'B & DATE' LAST TIME. HE WAS REALLY RUSTY AT SOMETHING HE NEVER FELT TO GOOD AT ANYWAY



BUT JANE.. YOU SEEM LIKE YOU'RE SMART AND FUNNY AND, WELL, BEAUTIFUL AND I REALLY LIKE YOU SO I HOPE YOU'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE...



AT THAT MOMENT I WOULD'VE DONE ANYTHING FOR HIM



TODAY MY OLDER SISTER GERTRUDE GOT MARRIED, LEAVING ME THE SINGLE SINGLE PEKAR GIRL...



WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR .. WOW, ALMOST FOUR YEARS. AFTER I GRADUATED FROM SCHOOL WE GOT A PLACE TOGETHER

STEPHEN GOT A JOB TEACHING U.S. HISTORY AT CAROL COLLEGE HERE IN THE CITY. THE MONEY ISN'T GREAT, BUT THERE'S NOTHING ELSE HE'D RATHER DO.

AND ME, I'M STRUGGLING TO GET MORE OF MY COMICS PUBLISHED. IT'S A DOG-EAT-DOG WORLD.

SO ANYWAY, TODAY AT MY SISTER'S WEDDING THE QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S LIPS IS "SO WHEN ARE YOU TWO CRAZY KIDS GOING TO GET MARRIED?" MY REPLY IS USUALLY A NON-COMMITTAL SHRUG...

Sigh...
EVEN A REJECTION LETTER IS BETTER THAN AN EMPTY MAIL BOX...

BUT I HAVE A SECRET:
TWO WEEKS AGO STEPHEN ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM

I SAID
NO

I'VE
GOT IT!!



DON'T GET ME WRONG-- I LOVE STEPHEN AND I'M IN LOVE WITH HIM AND AT THIS POINT ITS EASY AND PLEASANT TO IMAGINE SPENDING THE REST OF MY LIFE WITH HIM....

ANDREW AND I ARE MARRIED BUT WE'RE JUST AS HAPPY AS EVER*

...BUT MARRIAGE? MAYBE IT JUST SEEMS TOO ADULT FOR ME.

FIRST MARRIAGE.. THEN KIDS... THEN OLD AGE.. THEN DEATH. I REALIZE THE LATTER TWO WILL HAPPEN RING OR NO RING BUT...

SO I HAD TO SAY NO

JANEY! WHEN RE YOU AND THAT LONG HAIRD MAN OF YOURS GONNA GET MARRIED?

I DON'T KNOW, GRAMS



ED--THE INK STUD



GORDON: TERRIBLE. THESE GIRLS ARE DRIVING ME CRAZY.

NO LUCK, huh?

IT'S NOT EVEN THAT. I'M SO AFRAID OF BEING REJECTED, I JUST ASSUME THEY'LL SAY NO SO I DON'T EVEN TRY.

IT'S DOWNRIGHT PATHETIC!

IF THAT'S YOUR ATTITUDE, YOU'RE RIGHT, IT IS PATHETIC!

ED, YOU HAVE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE! GO IN THERE THINKING: "I'M A GREAT CATCH! SURE I HAVE MY FLAWS, BUT WHO DOESN'T? I'M SMART AND I'M COOL AND I'M FUNNY AND IF SHE CAN'T SEE THAT, FUCK'ER! FUCK HER AND HER SHALLOW SUPERFICIAL MALL RAT VALUES!! I'M ED VELASQUEZ, CARTOONIST, STUD. AMERICAN!!! DAMMIT!!"

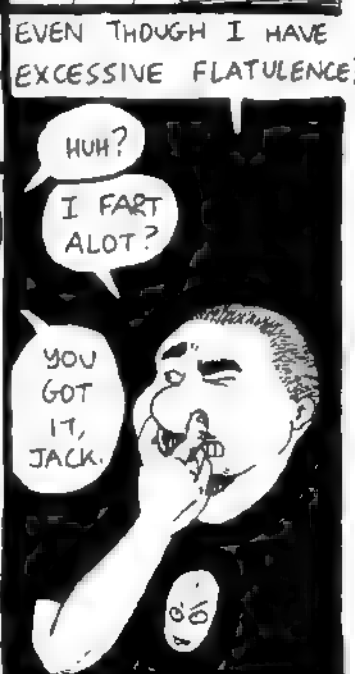
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

UH, ACTUALLY, I WAS BORN IN COSTA RICA

BUT YOU LIVE IN AMERICA!

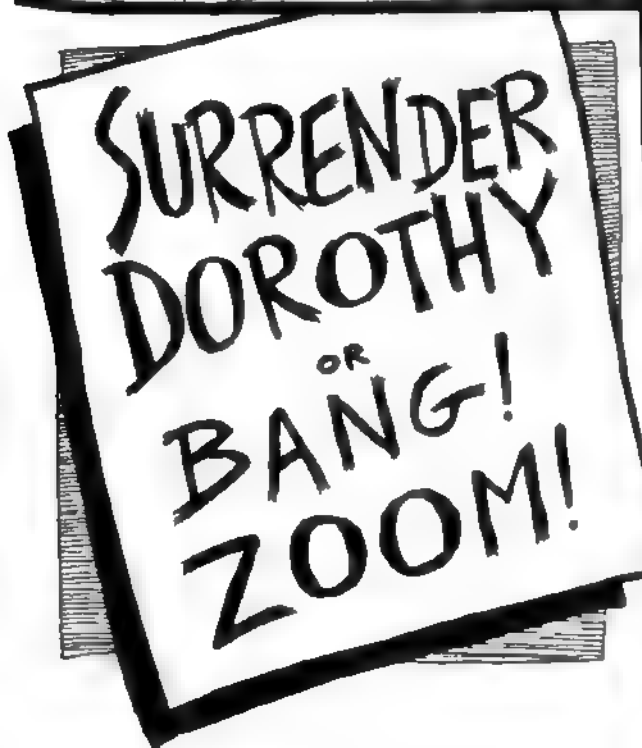
NOW GO GET LAID, ED!





IF YOU
COULD HAVE
BRUNCH
WITH ANY
FICTIONAL
CHARACTER,
WHO WOULD
IT
BE?









Uh miss?
Do you
need help?

I'm afraid
the party's
over and
you're gonna
have to



I'm
stuck.



"STUCK."



Sigh. I was out
here smoking a cigarette
- about 2 hours ago -
and my legs got caught
between these
bars.



Wait a
minute.

Umf.



Hmm it looks
like you're right.
You're really
stuck.



Very good, Watson!
Now, how about getting a
saw or something and get-
ting me out of here, hm?

WELL, OKAY, BUT
IF THAT LEG'S COMING
OFF I BETTER GET
SOME CLEAN TOWELS
AND PEROXIDE.



Ooooh! you mean for...
OKAY, I GET IT. BUT
I THINK I'VE GOT A
BETTER IDEA.



I'LL BE RIGHT
BACK. DON'T GO
AWAY!



HA.



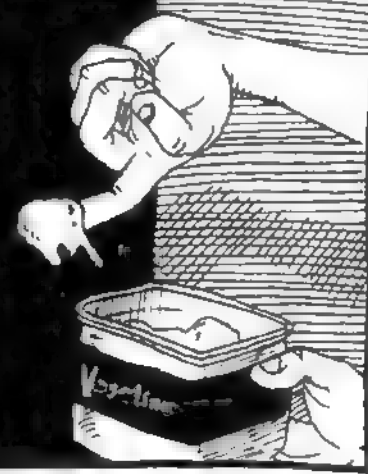
VOILA!



CAN I ASK
YOU WHAT YOU
INTEND TO DO
WITH THAT?



WE'LL JUST
GREASE YOU UP
AND SLIP YOU
RIGHT OUT!



WE'LL HAVE
YOU OUT IN
A JIFFY.

I HAVE TO SAY, IF I HAD
THOUGHT I WOULD BE USING
LUBRICATION TONIGHT IT
WASN'T FOR THIS.

WELL,
THE NIGHTS
STILL YOUNG.

OH IT IS,
IS IT?



OKAY, LETS
TRY IT

JA, PULLING
YOU OUT, I
MEAN.



YERF!

OWOW
OWOW!



OOOF!
I'M
FREE!

OUCH!



MY HERO! NEXT
TIME I GO TO
A PARTY I'LL
BRING MY OWN
VASELINE



Whew!

Heh.

OC!! WHERE THE
ARE YOU
ING?!!

I'VE GOTTA FIND
ARYSA! STAY HERE
AND WATCH THE
KIDS!

BUT WHERE
ARE...

"TO THE COMPUTER ROOM... I
THINK I'VE FIGURED OUT WHO
RATTED US OUT!"

MILADY... WE
HAVE TO GO.

I'M DEACTIVATING THE
LAUNCH SYSTEM NOW...
IN A MINUTE I.M.P.'S
MISSILE COMMAND WILL
BE USELESS.

ARYSA, I CAN'T
LET YOU DO THAT.
WE HAVE

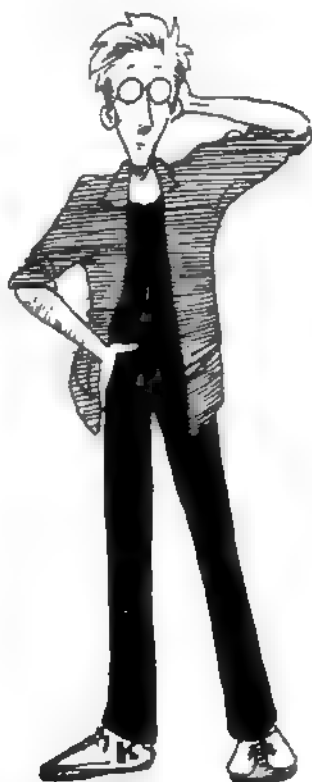
WHA-- MIHO,
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?!

WELL? WELL?
WHAT DO YOU
THINK?



THERE WAS THIS ONE MOMENT
WHERE I... YOU KNOW THAT
FEELING? WHERE ALL THE LITTLE
HAIRS ON YOUR NECK STAND UP
AND YOUR STOMACH'S ALL...

I DON'T KNOW. I JUST
HAVEN'T FELT THAT SENSATION
SINCE SALLY AND I
FIRST MET.



WELL, LET'S HOPE
IT WORKS OUT BETTER
THAN THAT DID.

SO WHY
DON'T YOU CALL
HER UP AND ASK
HER OUT OR
SOMETHING?

HEY,
GUYS.

HEY, JANE.
WHAT'S
UP?

OH, NOT MUCH.

SORRY TO
INTERRUPT, BUT IS
THIS YOUR STUFF IN
THE LIVING
ROOM, ED?

-BLESS
The
MESS

NO! NO, IT'S REALLY
GOOD. IT'S BEEN A LONG
TIME SINCE I'VE READ
ANY SCI-FI, BUT THIS
SEEMS GREAT.

WHO'S
YOUR
PUBLISHER?

OH, YEAH.
SORRY TO
LEAVE A
MESS.

8/32

UH, WELL, NO
ONE, ACTUALLY.
I HAVE AN INTER-
VIEW AT ZOOM
COMICS TOMORROW.



HEY, JAMES, WHAT'S UP? .. YEAH, NOTHING MUCH...

OH, THANKS FOR COMING, I'M GLAD YOU HAD A GOOD TIME... NO, NO, I RUBBED SOME SELTZER ON IT AND THE STAIN CAME RIGHT OUT. LISTEN, THERE WAS THIS GIRL AT THE PARTY... SHORT BROWN HAIR, REALLY CUTE... A BLACK SKIRT, DRESS TYPE THING. DID SHE COME WITH YOU?.. DO YOU KNOW HER NAME OR ANYTHING?

NO SORRY, SHERMAN. I THINK I REMEMBER HER, BUT SHE WASN'T WITH ME. YOU ASK JANICE?

UMM... NOPE. DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ANYONE I KNOW, SORRY.

WHATSAMATTER, THIS CHICK GIVE YOU CRABS OR SOMETHING?... NAH, I NEVER EVEN SAW HER.





WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW PERFECT WE ARE FOR EACH OTHER! WE BOTH LIKE LAUREL AND HARDY, RAYMOND CARVER, BILLY JOEL AND GYROS, WE BOTH HATE ROD STEWART, AND WE SHARE THE SAME INTELLIGENT, CYNICAL, YET HUMOROUS APPROACH TO LIFE! IT'S AMAZING!

LET'S HAVE SEX FOR HOURS, SOULMATE!



WOW! ISN'T THAT ED VELASQUEZ, THE CARTOONING GENIUS BEHIND THE Star Raiders™ THE NEWEST COMIC FROM ZOOM?

OH, ED, I'M SORRY I IGNORED YOU IN HIGH SCHOOL.

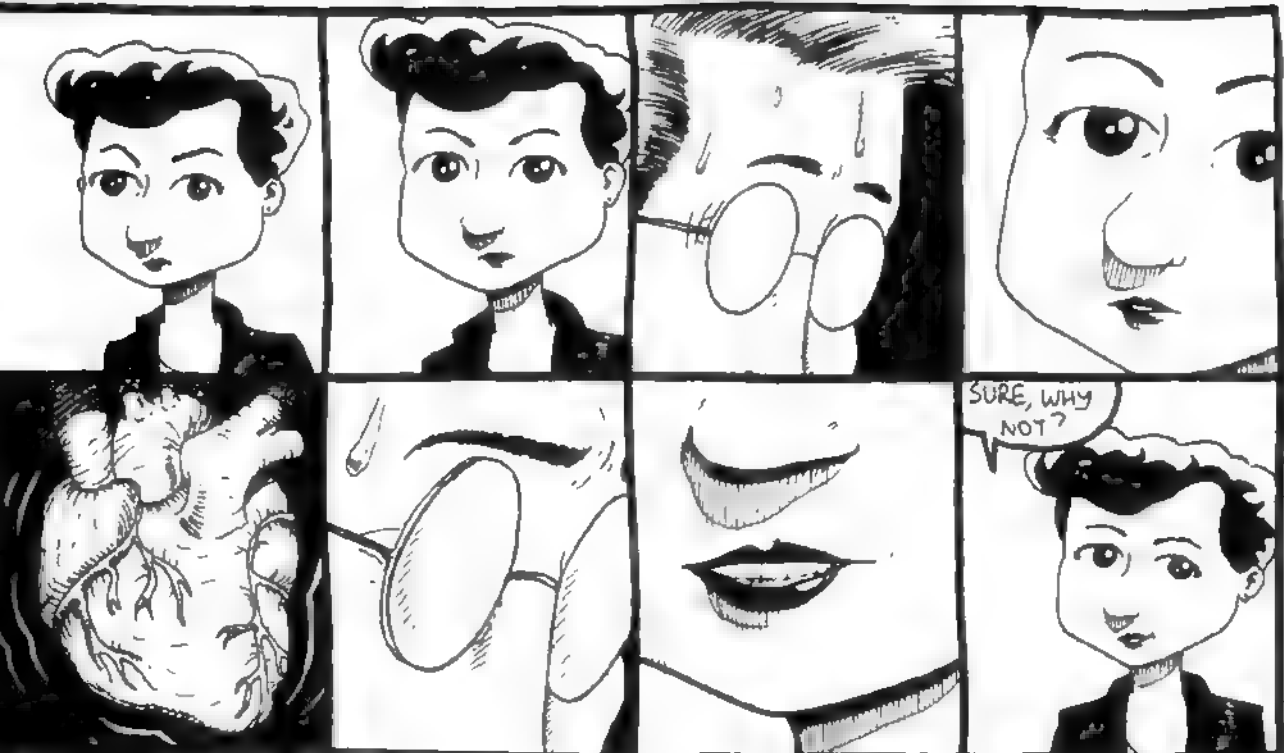
THAT'S OKAY, BABY. Heh Heh!

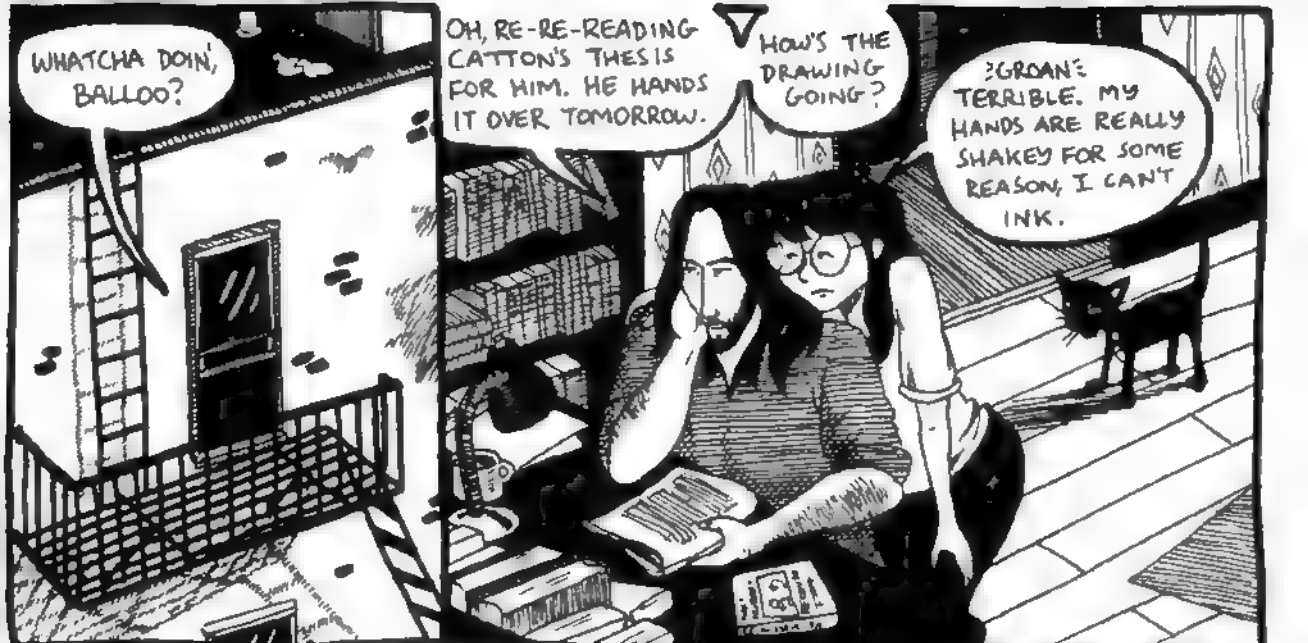
ED, I REPRESENT CADBURY FILMS AND WE'D LIKE TO MAKE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE BASED ON YOUR COMIC!











WAS SO NERVOUS! BUT
I COULDN'T BELIEVE
IT! SHE SAID YES!
AND SHE'S CUTE, TOO.
CUTER THAN
SALLY!

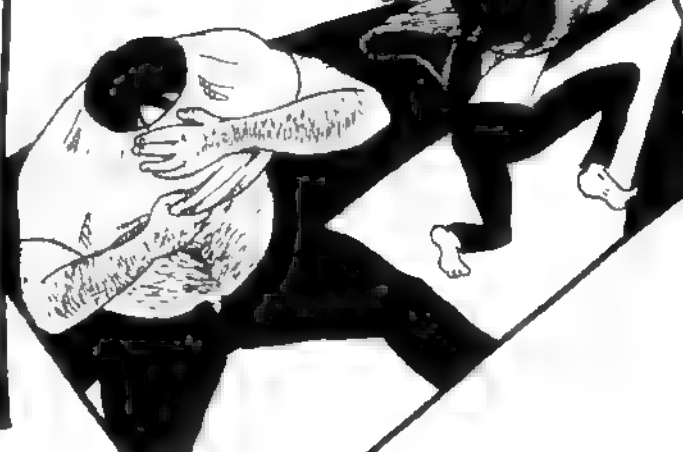
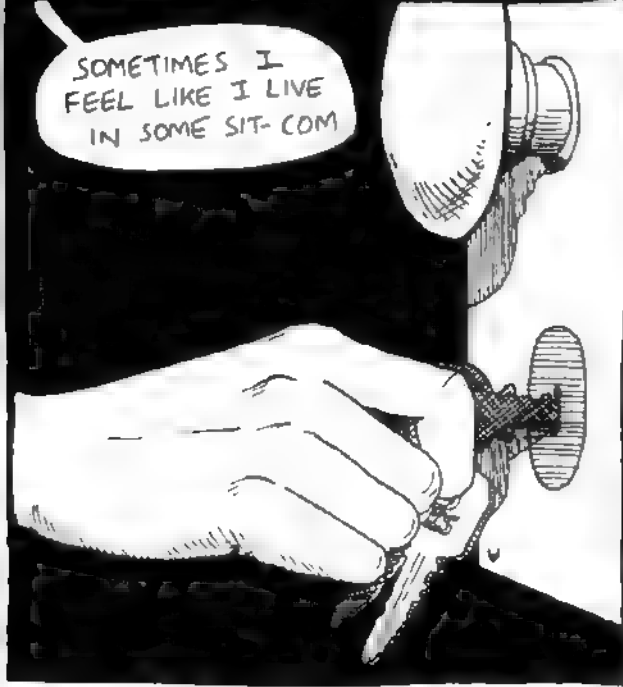


AS SOON AS SHE LEFT,
I REALIZED I STILL
DON'T KNOW HER
NAME!

OH YEAH?



SOMETIMES I
FEEL LIKE I LIVE
IN SOME SIT-COM







ED, I RAN YOUR PROJECT
PAST THE BIG WIGS UPSTAIRS
AND, UM, THEY PUT THE
KIBOSH ON IT...

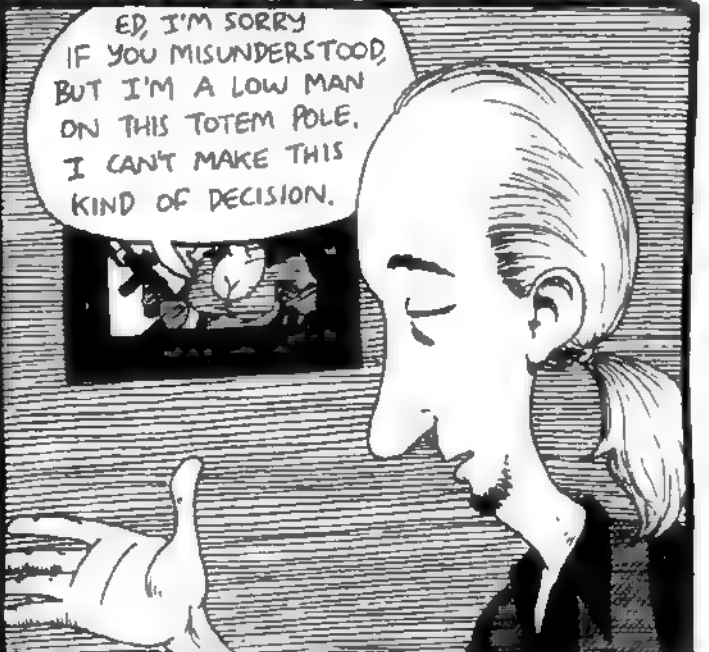
I'M AFRAID
WE WON'T BE
HIRING YOU AT
THIS JUNCTURE.



ED, I
HOPE THIS
DOESN'T...

BUT... BUT YOU MADE IT
SOUND LIKE IT WAS A CINCH!
LIKE IT WAS JUST A MATTER
OF DOTTING THE TEES AND
CROSSING THE AYES ON
THE CONTRACT!

ED, I'M SORRY
IF YOU MISUNDERSTOOD,
BUT I'M A LOW MAN
ON THIS TOTEM POLE.
I CAN'T MAKE THIS
KIND OF DECISION.

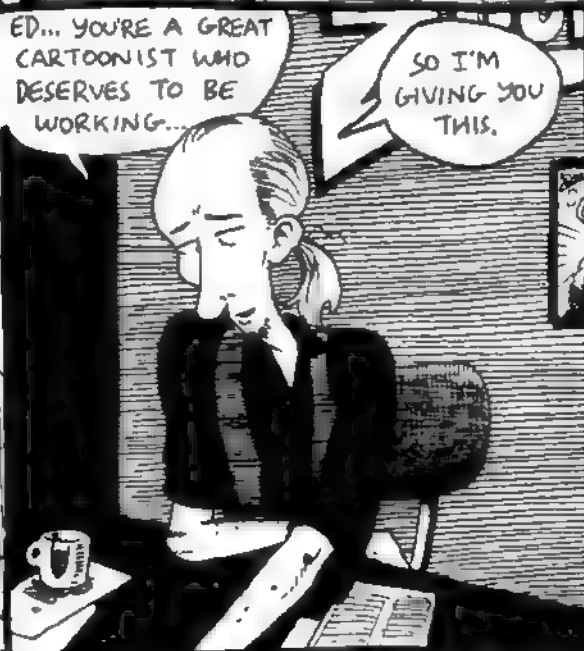


SWELL

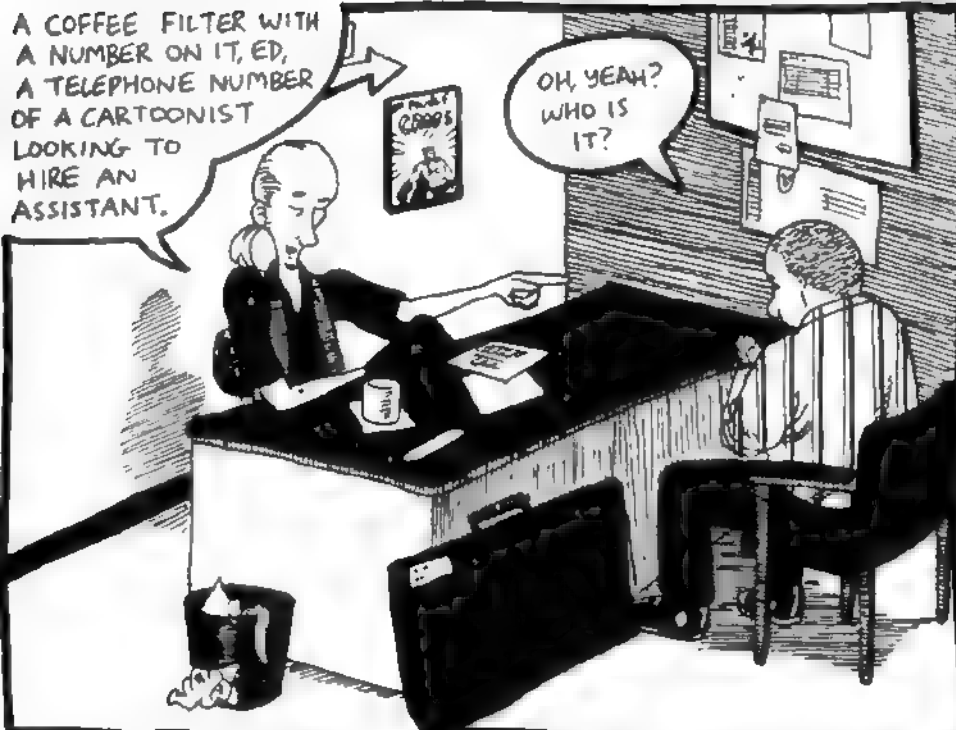
ED... YOU'RE A GREAT
CARTOONIST WHO
DESERVES TO BE
WORKING...

SO I'M
GIVING YOU
THIS.

A COFFEE
FILTER?



A COFFEE FILTER WITH A NUMBER ON IT, ED, A TELEPHONE NUMBER OF A CARTOONIST LOOKING TO HIRE AN ASSISTANT.



OH, YEAH? WHO IS IT?

IRVING-- Uh, WAIT-- FLAVOR! IRVING- FLAVOR.



WHO?

ACTUALLY, ED, HE'S AN OLD TIMER WE DON'T USE MUCH ANYMORE, BUT THE EXPERIENCE YOU'LL GET WORKING WITH HIM WILL BE INVALUABLE.

ALOT OF THE HOTTEST TALENT AROUND TODAY STARTED OUT AS ASSISTANTS. BILLY McKENICA STARTED AS AN ASSISTANT TO ROBBIE GARDNER. "HERO SQUAD" HELPED WITH BACKGROUNDS FOR "THE X-FILES".

THIS ISN'T HAPPENING.

OH, YEAH?



SO NOT ONLY ARE THEY NOT GOING TO PUBLISH MY BOOK, BUT HE'S OFFERING ME A JOB SHARPENING PENCILS FOR SOME DINOSAUR.

HELPED INK NICKY AMENDOLA'S STUFF AT THE HOSTED CHRIS C. ECKER FOR TWO YEARS! APPRENTICESHIP TO GET ALL THE SKILLS YOU NEED TO GET IN THE FIELD. YOU WON'T GET ANYWHERE WITHOUT NETWORKING. I'VE SHOWN ALL OF EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS IN THE

SO, E MAY DAY GOOD ENOUGH WORK ZOOM. BUT NOW, I GUESS YOU'RE NOT READY. BUT YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF POTENTIAL, ED, SO DON'T GIVE UP!

THIS IS A NIGHTMARE. I SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME HERE. I'LL NEVER GET A CARTOONING JOB.

I GUESS SO.

THANKS ALOT.

CAN I GO JUMP OUT THE WINDOW NOW?











SHERMAN!



HUH?
OH, YOU
MADE
IT

HI! WERE YOU JUST ABOUT
TO LEAVE? I'M REALLY
SORRY I'M LATE! REALLY,
MY DOG WAS SICK.



MM, NOTHING
SERIOUS, I HOPE.



OH, NO, JUST
SOME HAIRBALL
THING. GROMIT GETS
THEM ALL THE
TIME.

ARE WE
TOO LATE
FOR THE
MOVIE?



WELL, THE MOVIE
STARTED FIFTEEN
MINUTES AGO, SO...

OOH, I'M REALLY
SORRY. OKAY, HOW
ABOUT WE JUST SKIP
THE MOVIE AND EAT
SOMEWHERE?

HOW
ABOUT
SLAGGERS?
IS THAT
OKAY WITH
YOU?



SLAGGER'S?
SURE. OH, AND
I GOT YOU
THIS.



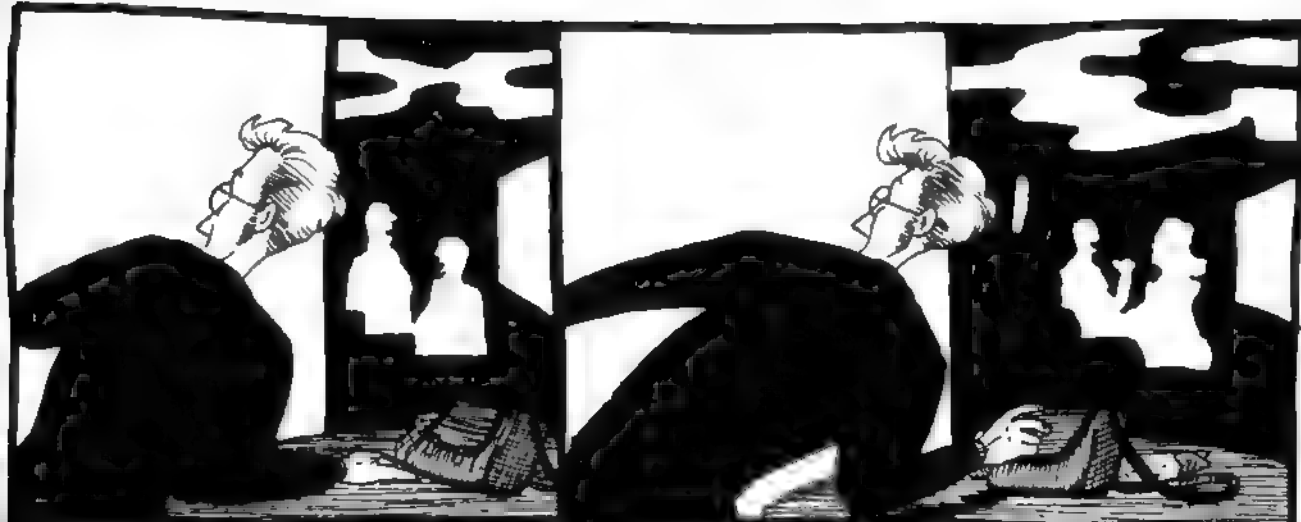
A ROSE! HOW PERFECTLY
CHARMING! THANKS,
SHERMAN.



YOU'RE
WELCOME

I HAVE
TO FIND
OUT HER
NAME!





DRIVER'S LICENSE
DRIVER'S LICENSE
DRIVER'S LICENSE
HURRY BEFORE SHE
GETS BACK WHAT'S
HER NAME HURRY
BEFORE--UT!

WHAT IF SHE DOESN'T
HAVE ONE? WHAT IF SHE
BUSTS ME GOING THROUGH
HER-- AHHA!

(YEESH, WHAT
A PHOTO)

BEATRICE! HER
NAME IS BEATRICE
LESTRADE!

BEATRICE. BEATRICE.
BEA. AUNT BEA.
BEATRICE!
BEATRICE!



READY TO EAT,
SHERMAN?

I SURE AM
... BEATRICE.

WHY DID YOU
CALL ME
THAT?!











THAT
WAS
GREAT.

MMM...MAN,
IF I WASN'T
ALWAYS SO BROKE,
I'D EAT SLAGGERS
SPAGHETTI EVERY
NIGHT.

CAN I
GET YOU
SOMETHING
ELSE?



YES, I'LL
HAVE AN
ALABAMA
SLAMMER,
PLEASE

OH, UH,
JUST A
SCREWDRIER
FOR ME

SO. I READ SOMEWHERE THAT
METROCHIC HAD A BIG EDITORIAL
SHAKE UP LATELY. IS THIS
TRUE?



SIGH: YEAH, A FEW MONTHS
AGO THEY HIRED THIS NEW
WOMAN TO REVAMP THE
MAGAZINE.

IT'S A PUBLICITY
STUNT MORE THAN ANYTHING
ELSE. SHE ACTS LIKE SOME BIG
QUEEN BEE BUT WE ALL
HATE HER. SHE WON'T
LAST.

STILL, IT'S
WRITING,
RIGHT?

A LITTLE. MOST
OF IT IS PETTY OFFICE
POLITICAL BULLSHIT.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANYTHING PUBLISHED, SHERMAN?

UH, I'VE TRIED SUBMITTING SOME--UH, NO, I HAVEN'T, REALLY.

IT'S A TOUGH RACKET.

YEAH, ACTUALLY, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO WRITE AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO LATELY. THE DAMN BOOKSTORE WEARS ME DOWN.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING THERE?

HMM. IT WILL BE FOUR YEARS THIS OCTOBER. OY. I STARTED MY SOPHMORE YEAR.

WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU GO TO?

HUNTER, HERE IN THE CITY. ENGLISH MAJOR. ME, TOO. ABOUT THE ENGLISH, I MEAN. I WENT TO SARAH LAWRENCE.

UH, ISN'T THAT A GIRL'S SCHOOL?

IT USED TO BE. I DID GO TO AN ALL-GIRL'S HIGH SCHOOL, THOUGH, AND AN ALL-GIRL COLLEGE MY FRESHMAN YEAR. IT WAS THE ONLY SCHOOL MY DAD

WOULD PAY FOR, AT FIRST.

THAT MUST'VE BEEN ROUGH.

IT WAS, AT FIRST. THEN I GOT MYSELF KICKED OUT.

THEY KICKED YOU OUT? WHAT FOR?

WELL, IT SEEMS I WAS HAVING THIS LITTLE FLING WITH THE DEAN'S SON.

THEY KICKED YOU OUT FOR THAT?

WELL, IT ALSO SEEMS THIS DEAN'S SON WAS SIXTEEN YEARS OLD.

AAAH. THE JOEY BUTTAFUOCO OF THE SORDRITY SET, eh?

MM. OR HUMBERT HUMBERT.

DID YOU GROW UP IN THE CITY?

YES. AND I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE BORN HERE, TOO, BUT I WAS BORN TWO WEEKS EARLY, WHILE MY PARENTS WERE ON VACATION IN JERSEY. IT WAS THE LAST TIME I WAS EARLY FOR ANYTHING.

HEY, I FROM NEW JERSEY, TOO!

IMAGINE THAT. DO YOU LIKE LIVING IN BROOKLYN?

YEAH. PARK SLOPE'S A GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD. BUT THE SAY IT'S GOING TO BE THE NEXT SEATTLE.

REALLY? I HEARD IT WAS GOING TO BE DES MOINES. DO YOU LIKE YOUR ROOMMATES?

YEAH, THEY'RE PRETTY COOL. JANE WANTS TO BE...

A CARTOONIST.

WOW. HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?

HAHA. WELL, IT'S KIND OF FUNNY, BUT I USED TO BE THEIR ROOMMATE.

JESUS! YOU'RE KIDDING! WHAT A COINCIDENCE! WHEN WAS THIS?

I JUST MOVED OUT ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO.

MAN, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. WHY DID YOU MOVE OUT?

WELL, I NEEDED MORE SPACE, AND I WANTED TO LIVE IN MANHATTAN.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED THERE NOW?

ABOUT



MY LONGEST GIRLFRIEND?
WAS MY ONLY SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP.
HER NAME WAS SALLY. WE BROKE UP THIS
1ST FEBRUARY.

SIX MONTHS AGO? WHO DUMPED WHO?
SHE DUMPED ME FOR SOME LOSER. BUT
IT WAS A LONG TIME COMING. I MEAN,
WE'D BEEN SLOWLY DRIFTING APART FOR
AWHILE. BUT WE WERE GOING OUT FOR
ALMOST TWO YEARS.

WERE YOU IN LOVE WITH HER?

UM... I SUPPOSE I WAS. AT LEAST IN
THE BEGINNING.

WOULD YOU GO OUT WITH HER AGAIN IF
YOU COULD?

NO. WE'RE TOO DIFFERENT NOW. WE
DIDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH IN COMMON TO
BEGIN WITH, AND IT ONLY GOT WORSE. NO,
I WOULDN'T. GO OUT WITH SALLY AGAIN, I
MEAN. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

NAH, SALLY'S NOT MY TYPE.

HA HA, NO, I MEAN WHAT'S YOUR LONG-
EST RELATIONSHIP?

HMMM, ACTUALLY, I GUESS IT WAS ONLY
FOUR MONTHS. PRETTY SAD, OH? I'VE GONE
OUT WITH MY SHARE OF GUYS, BUT THEY
ALL TURNED INTO ASSHOLES SOONER OR
LATER.

I'LL BEAR THAT IN MIND. YOU DON'T
BELIEVE IN ASTROLOGY, DO YOU?

ASTROLOGY? NO.

THANK GOD.

SHERMAN, DO YOU HAVE ANY
BROTHERS OR SISTERS?

I HAVE A YOUNGER BROTHER, JOE.
DOES HE WRITE TOO?

JOE? JEEZ, NO, HE'S A MECHANIC. HE NEVER
EVEN FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL BUT HE'LL PROBABLY
MAKE MORE THAN EITHER OF US. AND YOU?
ONLY CHILD. WELL, ACTUALLY, I HAVE A HALF-
BROTHER AND A HALF-SISTER.

WHAT WAS HE, A TRANS-SEXUAL?

NO, MY FATHER REMARRIED AFTER MY
MOTHER DIED.

OH. UM, SORRY I BROUGHT IT UP.

NO, NO, I BROUGHT IT UP. GREAT SMALL
TALK FOR A FIRST DATE, HUH?

ACTUALLY, UM, MY MOM DIED, TOO.
WHEN I WAS FOURTEEN.

REALLY? WHAT WAS HER NAME?

HER NAME? JOANNE, WHY?

JUST CURIOUS,

GEORGE.

WHY? WHAT
WAS YOUR MOTHER'S
NAME?

BEATRICE.

OH.



...THAT RESERVOIR DOGS WAS BETTER
REALLY? HUH, I SAW 'PULP FICTION'
SEVEN TIMES.

SEVEN TIMES?! MAN, THAT'S FIFTY-SIX
DOLLARS! FIVE C.D.S.

ACTUALLY, I SNUCK IN THE LAST
FOUR TIMES. WHAT CAN I TELL YOU?
IT WAS A GREAT MOVIE.

OKAY, HERE YOU GO: SUPPOSE THEY
MADE A MOVIE OF YOUR LIFE, OKAY?
WHO WOULD YOU WANT TO PLAY YOU?

YOU MEAN WHO LOOKS LIKE ME OR
WHO WOULD PLAY ME BEST OR...?

YEAH, WHO WOULD PLAY YOU BEST.
HMMM... LINDA LAVIN.

LINDA LAVIN?! YOU MEAN T.V.'S 'ALICE'?
SURE! WELL, A YOUNG LINDA LAVIN.
SHE'S A FINE ACTRESS.

THAT'S HYSTERICAL. "KISS MAH GRITS!"
THAT WAS POLLY HOLIDAY, FLO, WISE
GUY. WHY? WHO DO YOU THINK SHOULD
PLAY ME?

UMMM... WINONA RYDER?
HA!

EITHER HER OR NELL CARTER.
OH, FUCK YOU. OKAY, YOU KNOW
WHO SHOULD PLAY YOU? MR. SMARTY
PANTS? RICK MORANIS?

WHAT? YOU'RE KIDDING. I
HOPE YOU'RE KIDDING OR ELSE
I'M GOING HOME.

HAHAHA! OKAY, OKAY, NO
REALLY, YOU KNOW WHO CAN
PLAY YOU? REALLY?

I HAVE A FEELING I
DON'T WANT TO KNOW, BUT
WHO?

JIMMY STEWART.
HA HEH, YEAH,
RIGHT...
NO, REALLY...





SURE, A YOUNG JIMMY STEWART, WITH GLASSES, THE RIGHT HAIRCUT, I COULD SEE THAT.

WELL, HEH, MAYBE.

UM. I SHOULD PROBABLY GET GOING. IT'S LATE, RIGHT?

KISS HER YOU ASSHOLE! IT'S THE PERFECT TIME! KISS HER!!

WHICH TRAIN ARE YOU GOING TO? I'LL WALK YOU THERE.

I'M GOING TO THE "F," BUT YOU DON'T...



Uh...
Uh... I GUESS IT IS....



NO, IT'S OKAY, I'M JUST GOING TO TAKE A CAB AFTER THAT



THANKS AGAIN FOR THE FLOWER, SHERMAN.



DOROTHY! HOLD ON A SECOND!

HUH?



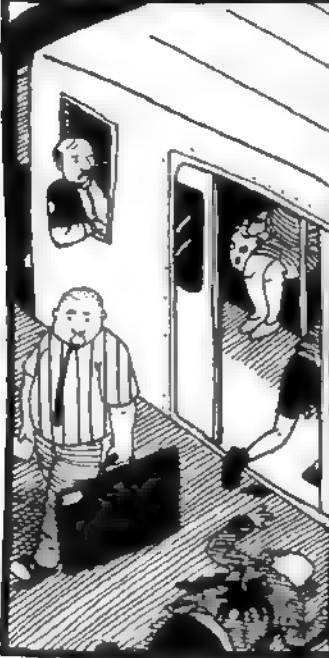
ED, THIS WORK IS AMAZING! I SHOULD BE THE ONE ASKING YOU!

AH, YOU'RE JUST SAYING THAT TO GET IN PANTS, MRS FLAVOR.

NO ED, I MEAN IT, YOU'RE ONE OF FINEST COMIC BOOK ARTISTS I'VE EVER SEEN!

BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, I DO WANT TO GET IN YOUR PANTS!

THIS IS MARCY AVENUE LAST STOP IN BROOKLYN!
"CRACKLE"





3L

bing
bong!

COMING!
HOLD YER
DAMN HORSES!

Uh, I'M ED VELASQUEZ.
I'M HERE FOR THE
ASSISTANT JOB

YER DAMN
RIGHT YOU
ARE!!





HORRIBLE
AS
ARE
THE
DEAD
...







I CAN JUST SEE IT!
SHE'S BEING ALL NICE
AND SWEET AND PURE,
UNTIL SHE'S GOT HIM
WHERE SHE WANTS
AND THEN...

HER TRUE **EVIL**
DEMONIC, USING
MESSY NATURE
WILL TAKE OVER AND
DRIVE POOR SHERMAN
INSANE!

JUST
LIKE SHE
DID WITH
US!

JANE, SHE
WASN'T ALL THAT
BAD, AND...

"WASN'T
THAT BAD?!"
SHE...

AND... AND THAT
WAS OVER A YEAR
AGO, MAYBE SHE
CLEANED UP
HER ACT

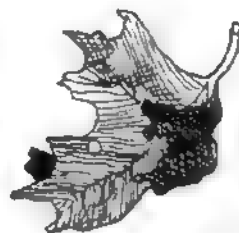
IT WAS
TEN
MONTHS
AGO!

BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY,
SHERMAN'S A BIG BOY WHO
CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF.
IF HE WANTS OUR ADVICE,
HE'LL ASK FOR IT.

NOW, C'MON, LET'S
SCARF DOWN SOME PAN-
CAKES AND MIMOSAS,
HUH?

MMM... OKAY,
OKAY. YOU'RE
RIGHT. BUT IF
HE DOES ASK,
I WON'T LIE
TO HIM, I'LL
TELL HIM
EVERYTHING!

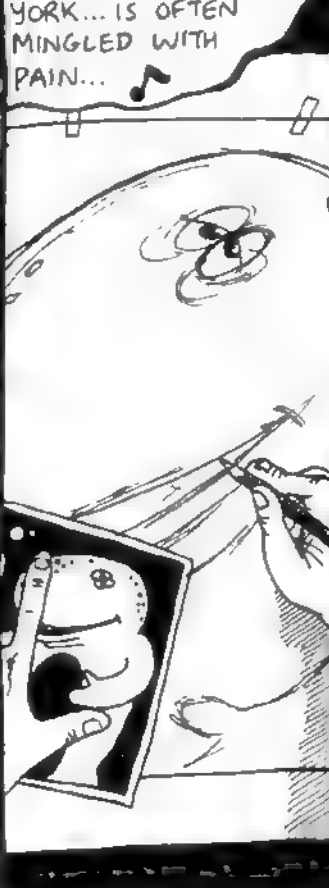
FINE,
FINE. CAN
WE GO
NOW?



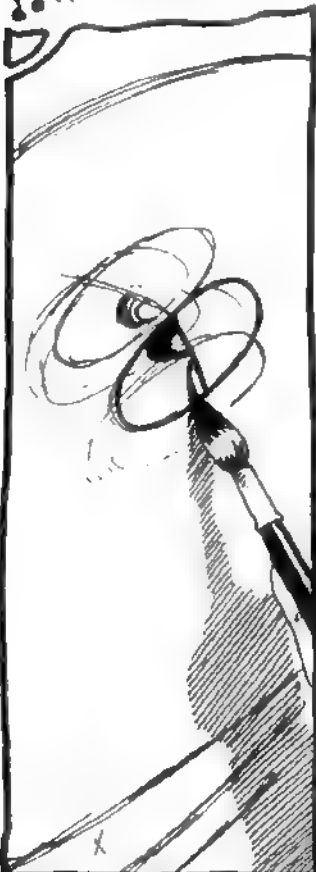
...GLITTERING CROWDS AND
SHIMMERING CLOUDS... IN CANYONS
OF STEEL... THEY'RE MAKING
ME FEEL... I'M HOME...

IT'S AUTUMN IN NEW
YORK THAT BRINGS THE
PROMISE OF NEW LOVE
... AUTUMN IN NEW
YORK... IS OFTEN
MINGLED WITH
PAIN...

DREAMERS WITH EMPTY
HANDS... MAY SIGH FOR
EXOTIC LANDS... IT'S
AUTUMN IN NEW YORK



IT'S GOOD TO LIVE
IT AGAIN...
AUTUMN IN NEW



Grant knew he should've called out sick. "Do you work here?" the two hundred and fifty seventh customer asked.

"Yes, can I help you with something?" Grant replied for the two hundred and fifty seventh time.

"Do you have a book called Basic Reading and Writing Skills? It's for a class. My teacher said you should have it and it's definitely in stock."

How would your teacher know that you moron? "It should be in aisle five, all the way in the back of the store."

"Really? Where's that?" the student asked with a vacant stare.

Grant let out an audible contemptuous sigh. "All the way in the back of the store. Aisle five." What kind of world is this where idiots are going to college to learn Basic Reading and Writing Skills anyway? Shouldn't that--

"And it would definitely be there?" the student asked skeptically. "Could you show it to me?"

"You'll have to ask a clerk back in aisle five, sir." Grant responded in his iciest voice possible, and he'd had alot of practice lately so it was near absolute zero. The thick headed moron finally started walking away. "Can I help someone find a book?" Grant called to the swarming mob.

It was textbook season at Matthew's books again. Every year, Grant swore it would be his last. A cute girl approached Grant for help, which was trouble. As one of his co-workers pointed out, cute girls are the worst kind of customers because the only time they come into a bookstore is when they are forced to. When Chris told him this, Grant shook his head at the sexist and yet true nature of the comment.

"Do you work here?" the girl asked.

"Yes, can I help you with something?" Grant replied.

"Yeah, um, do you have...uh, Don Quick-sote? It's for my literature class?"

Ah. Don Quixote. "Hmmm. Do you know the author?" Grant couldn't wait.

"Uhhh..." the girl stammered as she scanned her syllabus. No one told her college would be this tough! "Servants?"

Yow, Grant thought, another one to tell everyone in the stockroom. Grant indicated ten feet to his left. "That would be on the fiction wall under the author's last name."

The girl smiled helplessly. "I looked but I couldn't find it. Could you maybe show it to me?" As she said this, Grant could sense her shifting into the If-I-Act-Cute-He'll-Give-Me-What-I-Want mode. Most guys fell for it like suckers, but Grant had been around long enough to know better. The hidden, sometimes deeply sometimes barely at all, subtext of the young girl's posturing was "If you find it for me I'll think you're cute and have sex with you." As stated, at this point, most guys would let their hormones do the thinking and show this girl everything, but Grant knew. She was just another stupid customer. He would show her all the books on her list and then she'd be gone.

When it came down to it, Grant just wasn't a people person.

"No, I'm afraid if it wasn't on the shelf then we are sold out." Grant smiled limply. Why doesn't your Monday Night Football asshole boyfriend find it for you?









NO...
NONONONO.

WHAT? WHAT'S
WRONG WITH IT?
IT LOOKS FINE!

NO, NO, IT DOESN'T
LOOK FINE. HE LOOKS
LIKE HE'S ON HIS WAY
TO A DAMNED FUNERAL!

YOU GOT
TO MAKE HIM
SILLY! WACKY!

NO. NO.

MR. FLAVOR, WHAT COMIC
BOOK IS THIS FOR,
ANYWAY?

COMIC BOOK? KID, THIS IS FOR
SOME DAMN CEREAL BOX.

CEREAL BOX?!

I THOUGHT I
WAS SUPPOSED TO
BE ASSISTING YOU
ON COMICS.

"ZIGGY FLAKES
OR "SICKY CHIPS"
OR SOMETHING...



WHAT, YOU'RE SO GREAT
YOU THINK YOU CAN
JUST JUMP RIGHT IN
MR. HOTSHOT O'BIG TIME?
YOU THINK YOU CAN
DO IT, HUH?

SURE!

FUCK YOU.

DO THAT "SNOOKY"
BOX AGAIN AND MAYBE
I'LL LET YOU DO A
PAGE





IMAGINE THAT? HE WORKS FOR THEM FOR TWENTY-TWO YEARS, THEN EFFT! THOSE SONS OF BITCHES FIRE HIM. NO PENSION, NO THANK YOU, NO NOTHING.

I TOLD HIM... YOU KNOW WHY THEY FIRED HIM? A UNION. SOME YOUNG UPSTART FELLAS WERE TRYING TO START A UNION. HE THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA..

I TOLD HIM, I TELL HIM "TOMMY, ZOOM WON'T LIKE IT, THE COMPANY DON'T LIKE THIS UNION STUFF."



HE STARTED TALKING ABOUT HOW IT WAS SOMETHING WE ALL HAD TO DO. WE COULD GET ALL SORTS OF, LIKE, BENEFITS: HEALTH CARE, RETIREMENT PLANS. WE WOULD EVEN GET TO KEEP OUR ARTWORK.

DID... DID YOU JOIN?

OF COURSE NOT!

YOU KNOW WHY? EVEN THEN, I KNEW YOU CAN'T FIGHT CITY HALL, ED. AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, RIGHT? WHAT HAPPENED TO TOMMY?

THEY FIRED HIM.

ZOOM FIRED MOST OF 'EM MOSTLY OLDER GUYS WHO WERENT AS POPULAR ANYMORE. LIKE TOMMY.

HE TRIED GETTING WORK AT OTHER COMIC COMPANIES, BUT NO ONE WOULD TOUCH HIM AND THERE ARENT TOO MANY OTHER THINGS SUPER-HERO GUYS CAN DO.

LIKE I SAID, HE'S DEAD NOW.

THE POINT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU, KID, IS... THIS IS A TERRIBLE BUSINESS. THEY'LL CHEW YOU UP AND THROW YOU OUT LIKE YESTERDAY'S CABBAGE. SO YOU ALWAYS GOTTA LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE: YOU!

I GUESS SO.

BUT WOULDN'T THE UNION HAVE WORKED IF EVERYONE JOINED? THEN IT WOULD HAVE...





THANKS, SPIKE, GOOD WORK!

ALRIGHT, I AM I GOING TO AM I GOING TO NASTY OR WILL YOU WHO SENT YOU?

L-LORD FYRE.

DATTT!

HMM! HOW DID LORD FYRE KNOW WHERE WE WERE? IN ANY CASE WE OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO GET MOVING!

C'MON, BOYS!

YOU DID ALL OF THIS YOURSELF? WHO'D YOU DO IT FOR?

HAVE YOU REALLY BEAT THE TAR DOTA THAT GUY? HAHHA!

HAHAHA!

OH, IT'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR YEARS

YEAH, HUM?

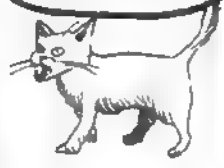
WELL I HATE TO BE THE ONE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, KID, BUT NO ONE BUYS SCI-FI ANYMORE.

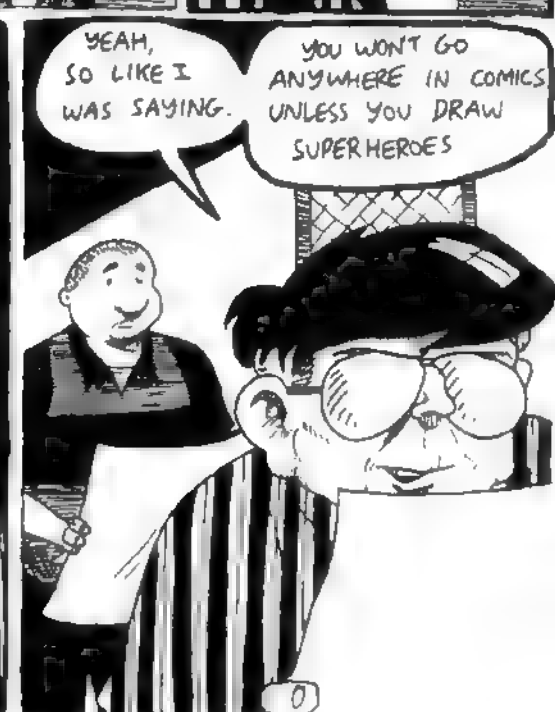
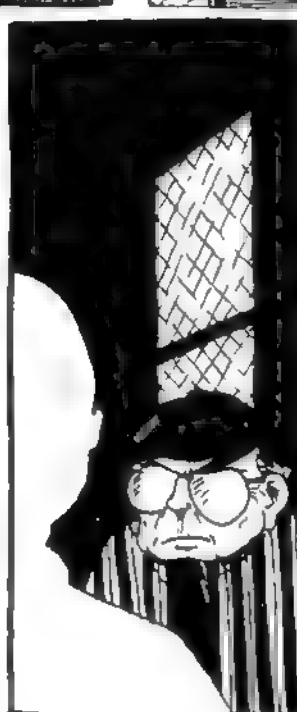
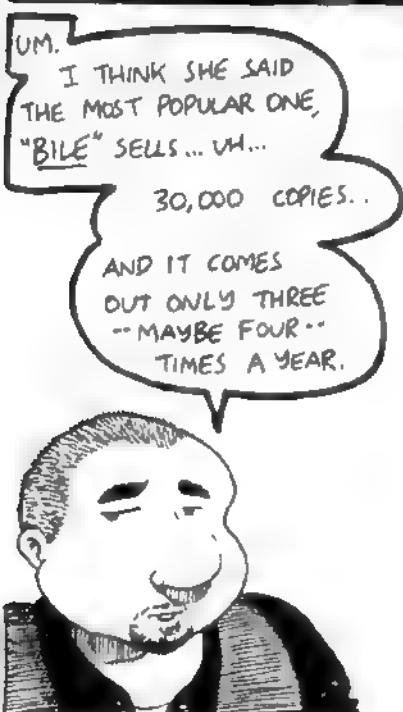
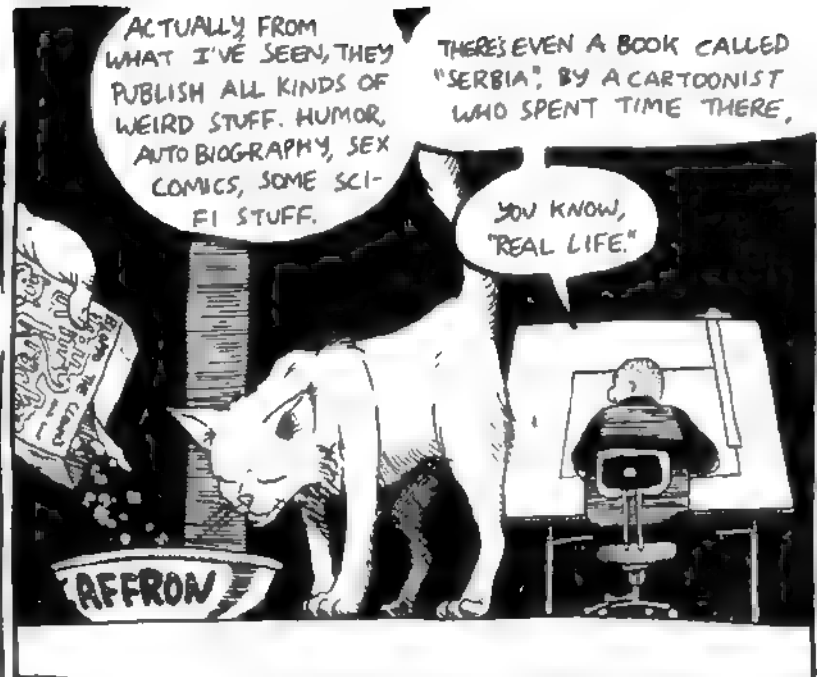
I GUESS SO.

BUT THIS GIRL I KNOW, JANE, WAS TELLING ME ALL ABOUT SOME OF THESE, UM, "ALTERNATIVE" PUBLISHERS?

SOME OF THEM DONT EVEN PUBLISH SUPERHEROES!

YOU WON'T GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT DOING SUPER-HEROES.





YES, YES.

YES! THAT'S IT,
ED, YOU GOT THAT
DAMN KOOKINESS!

WELL, THIRD
TIMES THE CHARM,
I GUESS.

SO NOW CAN I
DO A REAL COMIC
BOOK PAGE?



OKAY, SO IN THIS LAST PANEL, CAPTAIN
FORCE TURNS AND HE SAYS, HE SAYS,
"KIDS! BEATING UP VILLAINS IS MY
JOB. YOUR JOB IS TO SAY
NO TO DRUGS!"

OKAY, I'VE ROUGHED IN
THE PENCILS HERE, SO NOW
ALL YOU GOT TO DO IS TIGHTEN
THEM UP, LETTER THE PAGE
AND THEN INK THE
DAMN THING, OKAY?

GOTCHA.



OH, AND
HERE LET ME
GIVE YOU
THESE.

A black and white cartoon illustration of a man with a beret, glasses, and a plaid shirt, gesturing with his hand. The man has a friendly expression and is looking towards the viewer. He is wearing a dark beret with a small emblem, round glasses, and a plaid shirt with a dark tie. His right hand is raised in a gesture, palm facing forward. The background is simple, with a few lines suggesting a setting.

JACK? SURE
HE DID A TURN WITH
US AT ZOOM AFTER
HE FIRST LEFT
MARVEL.

DECENT GUY.
HELL OF A GUY HELL
OF AN ARTIST,
TOO.

YEAH. I CAN'T BELIEVE
HOW BADLY MARVEL TREATED
HIM. HE CREATED ALL OF THEIR
BIG CHARACTERS AND THEY
TREATED HIM LIKE SHIT.



YEAH, WELL, JACK WAS A BIG BOY.
HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS GET-
TING INTO. HE KNEW THAT
THE COMPANY OWNED WHAT-
EVER HE DID.

YEAH, BUT HE HAD NO WAY OF
KNOWING THAT MARVEL
WOULD MAKE MILLIONS OFF
OF HIM! I'M SURE HE
WOULD'VE --

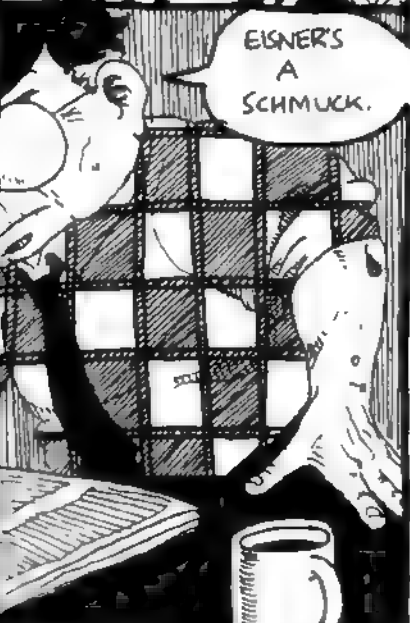
HE STILL WOULD'VE WORKED
FOR THEM! IN THOSE DAYS
IT WAS THEIR WAY OR
THE HIGHWAY.



I GUESS
SO.

STILL, I THINK WILL EISNER
PROBABLY HAD THE RIGHT
IDEA. HE WORKED OUT A DEAL
TO OWN ALL HIS WORK. I
KNOW MARVEL MADE MORE,
BUT I'M SURE EISNER
MADE A PRETTY
PENNY.

EISNER'S
A
SCHMUCK.



EISNER?
WILL EISNER?!
GET OUT OF
HERE?

HE'S A
GENIUS!

A GENIUS?
NO.

BEETHOVEN IS A
GENIUS. PICASSO IS
A DAMNED GENIUS.
THAT GUY, GATE, WHO
INVENTED COMPUTERS
IS A GENIUS.

EISNER'S
SOME
CARTOONIST

SO, WHAT, BECAUSE
HE'S A CARTOONIST
HE CAN'T BE A
GENIUS?

THAT'S
RIGHT, THAT'S
RIGHT.

WHY?

ED, LOOK AT THE BUSINESS
WE'RE IN. COMICS ARE NOT
SOMETHING YOU ASPIRE TO.
MOST CARTOONISTS REALLY
WANT TO DO SCI-FI BOOK COVERS
AND OTHER SERIOUS
ILLUSTRATION WORK.

HOW CAN YOU SAY
THAT?! THERE ARE A
LOT OF CARTOONISTS
WHO LOVE CARTOONING,
WHO LOVE COMICS!

YEAH, AND
YOU KNOW WHAT
THEY'RE CALLED?
LOSERS.

WHAT?!

WHO ELSE WOULD SPEND EIGHT
HOURS DOING A PAGE OF
DRAWINGS FOR \$50 WHEN
THEY COULD DO A SERIOUS
ILLUSTRATION IN HALF THAT
TIME AND GET PAID TEN
TIMES AS MUCH?

MAYBE BECAUSE THEY LOVE
DOING IT AND IT GIVES THEM
A SATISFACTION THAT
ILLUSTRATION DOESN'T.

YEAH, WELL SO
DOES JERKING OFF BUT
YOU'D BE A FOOL TO
TURN DOWN A GOOD
PAYING JOB FOR
THAT.

"JERKING
--?!"



later.

Z
Z
Z
Z

MR. FLAVOR.
WAKE UP.

MR. FLAVOR,
I'M LEAVING
AND I NEED
MY MONEY.

SFX:
WHA-

LEAVING? IT'S
ONLY 6:00, ED, YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO STAY
UNTIL 7:30.

MR. FLAVOR, I TOLD YOU,
I NEEDED TO LEAVE
EARLY TODAY, REMEMBER?

SO CAN
I HAVE MY
MONEY?

DAMN, YOU'RE RIGHT,
I'M SORRY. LET ME
GET IT NOW.

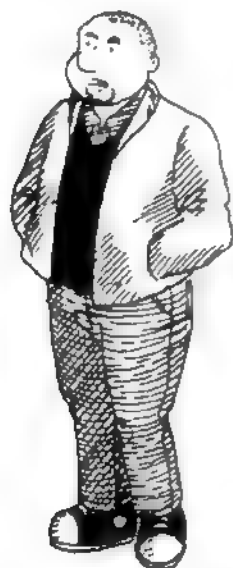
SO HOW
MANY HOURS
DO I OWE
YOU?

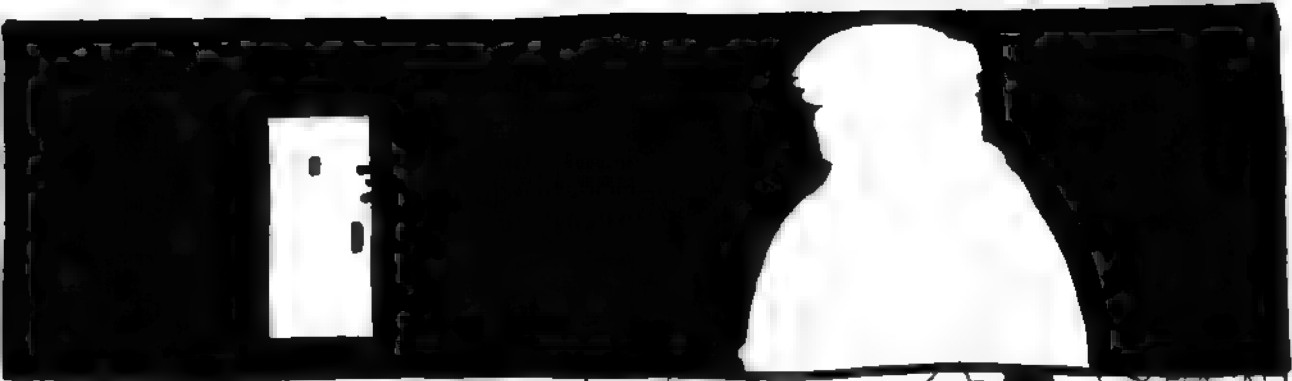
FORTY
FOUR



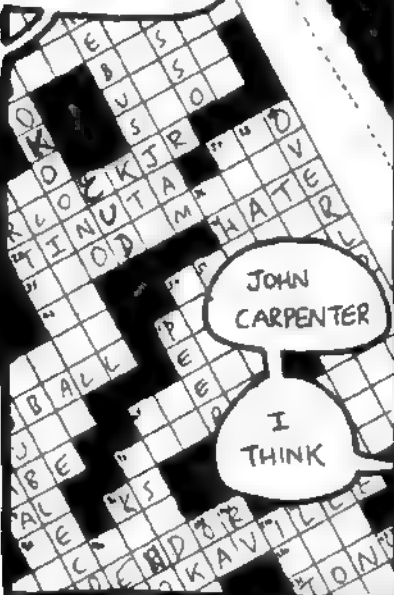


NO. WERE SEEING "NIGHTSTALKER IV"





WHO DIRECTED
"HALLOWEEN"?



JOHN
CARPENTER

I
THINK

WHERE'S SHERMAN TONIGHT?
OH, WAIT, LET ME GUESS:



HE'S OUT
WITH
HER.

BUZZZ:
TRY
AGAIN

ACTUALLY, HE
SAID HE WENT
TO THE MOVIES
WITH ED.

REALLY? GOOD. MAYBE HER
VOODOO SPELL ON HIM ISN'T
AS STRONG AS WE FEARED.



WELL, HE DID SAY
HE WAS GOING TO HER
PLACE TOMORROW.

WHAT'S A
FIFTEEN LETTER
WORD FOR
"CINEMATIC
BOMB ELEMENT"?

FIRST
LETTER IS
"B".



WAIT, HE'S GOING
TO HER HOUSE?

THAT'S WHAT
I WAS LED TO
BELIEVE.



EXCELLENT.



SECRET OF THE NIGHTSTALKER





FUCK YOU, AND YOUR LITTLE "OH-I'M-GOING-TO-MY-LITTLE-GIRLFRIENDS-HOUSE-TONIGHT." YOU SON OF A GOD DAMNED BITCH!

HAHAHA! YOU JEALOUS BASTARD.

I KNOW, I KNOW. YOU'RE RIGHT. :UGH: I NEED A GIRLFRIEND. THIS VIRGINITY IS KILLING ME. IF I DON'T GET A GIRL-FRIEND SOON, I'LL GO CRAZY.

AT THIS POINT, I SHOULD JUST GO TO A--

Welcome!
to
VIVISON CINEMAS

UT! IT'S STARTING!

I HOPE THERE'S GOOD PREVIEWS.

SHH!

ONCE IN EVERY GENERATION THERE COMES A FILM LIKE NO OTHER... COMING THIS SPRING FROM FAMILY FILMS, TOMMY BRAD IN... "CATCHER"

BUT DON'T YOU WONDER WHERE THE DUCKS GO IN WINTER, PHEBE?

BUD
OH, HOLDEN! :giggle:
PARTY

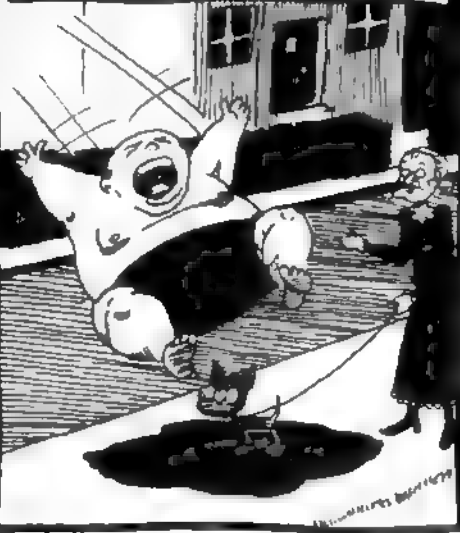
IF YOU LOVED HIM ON "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE", YOU'LL LOVE TWO HOURS OF HIM IN "FAT GUY"

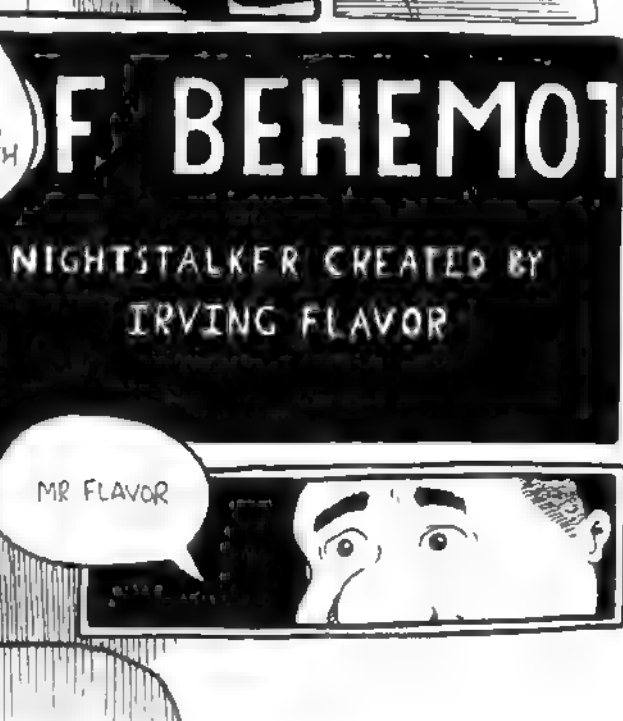
DONNIE DEDVED CALLED IT: "PULP FIKTION WITHOUT ALL THAT DIALOGUE"... IT'S "DEAD MEAT"

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD, ED.

HEY BUDDY, SHUT UP!

SHHH! IT'S STARTING!





F BEHEMOT

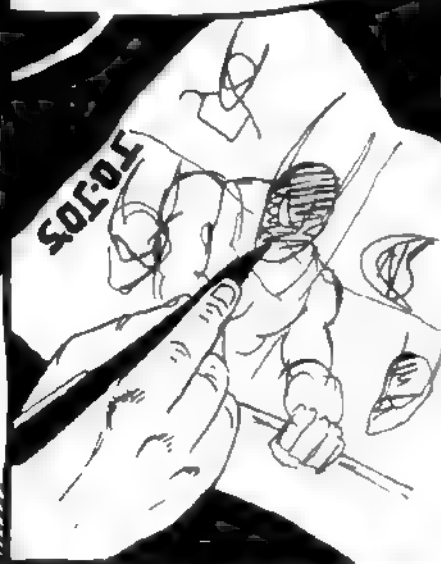
NIGHTSTALKER CREATED BY
IRVING FLAVOR

MR FLAVOR

SEE THAT'S JUST IT: I'M SURE MR. FLAVOR DOESN'T MAKE A NICKEL ON ANY OF IT. THE MOVIES, THE TOYS, THE T-SHIRTS, EVEN THE COMICS. ZOOM OWNS NIGHTSTALKER LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL.

MAMF, DAF SHUCKS...igdp= BUT CAN'T HE SUE OR ANYTHING?

PROBABLY NOT, EVEN IF HE'S IN THE RIGHT, IT MEANS SUING A HUGE CORPORATION WITH TONS OF LAWYERS HE COULDN'T AFFORD TO FIGHT



YEAH, BESIDES, HE PROBABLY TRIED EVERYTHING HE COULD

MAN, I USED TO LOVE THAT NIGHTSTALKER COMIC BOOK.

"JUSTICE COMES BY NIGHT."



WELL, I GUESS WE'LL CALL IT A NIGHT.

HMMM. IT'S STILL KIND OF EARLY.

DOROTHY JUST LIVES UP ON 23RD MAYBE I'LL PAY HER A SURPRISE VIST. YOU WANT TO COME?

IT'S TEMPTING, BUT I'LL LEAVE YOU LOVEBIRDS ALONE.

SEE YOU LATER.





WHAT'S
THE
STRANGEST
PLACE
YOU'VE
MADE
WHOOPEE
?

ON THE
ROOF OF MY
GIRLFRIEND'S
APARTMENT
BUILDING.



WHOOPEE?

YOU MEAN,
LIKE,
CHEWBACCA?



HMMM...

PROBABLY
ON THE "M"
TRAIN.

CHRISTMAS
EVE, 1989



UH, ON MY
PARENT'S KITCHEN
TABLE.

EVERYONE
ELSE WAS
ASLEEP.



UP THE
BUTT.
HA HA!

ACTUALLY, IN
THE MOVIES.
DURING "THREE
AMIGOS."

WHAT A
SHITTY MOVIE!



THE
WOODS?



YOU KISS
YOUR MOTHER
WITH THAT
MOUTH?

GET YOUR
DAMNED MIND OUT
OF THE GUTER.

A WHORE-
HOUSE IN
TORONTO.



PEEP SHOW

SHERMAN!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?

WHAT A
PLEASANT
SURPRISE



ARE YOU SURE?
I HAVE A FEELING
I CAUGHT YOU AT
A BAD TIME

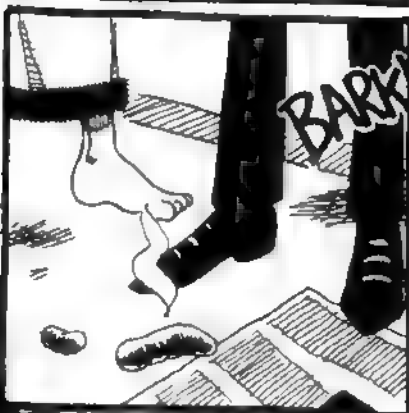
NO, NO, I WAS
JUST IN THE
MIDDLE OF
SOME CLEANING

IT'S
MARVELOUS
TO SEE
YOU.

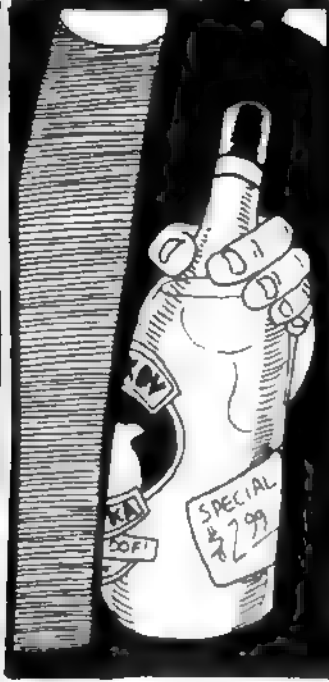
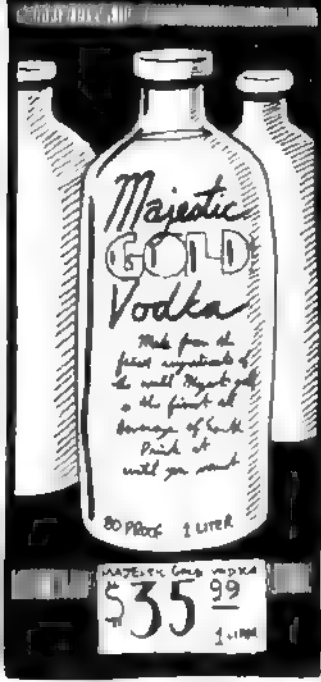
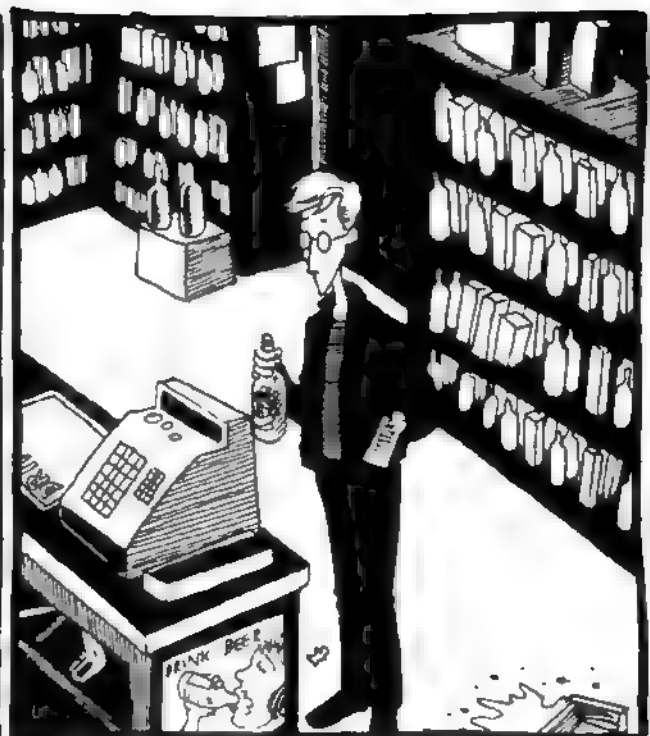
MMM











U.P.S. I
HAVE A DELIVERY
FOR A MISS
DOROTHY
LESTRADE!

COME ON
IN, IT'S
OPEN.

HEY, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE
WHAT HAPPENED! I WAS BUY-AI-AI-YI!

READY
TO GO
LOW-VAIR?

WELL, LET'S NOT
MAKE ANY HASTY
DECISIONS...WE
COULD ALWAYS
JUST STAY IN!

LOOK, I
EVEN BOUGHT
US SOME
MAJESTIC
GOLD!

Heh
Heh

OH NO YOU
DON'T!

IF YOU'RE GOING TO
PLY ME WITH LIQUOR UNTIL
I PASS OUT SO YOU CAN
HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME
I WANT IT TO BE IN A
NICER DUMP THAN THIS.

AFTER TWO MONTHS, I'D
THINK YOU WOULD HAVE
MORE REALISTIC EXPECTA-
TIONS BY NOW.

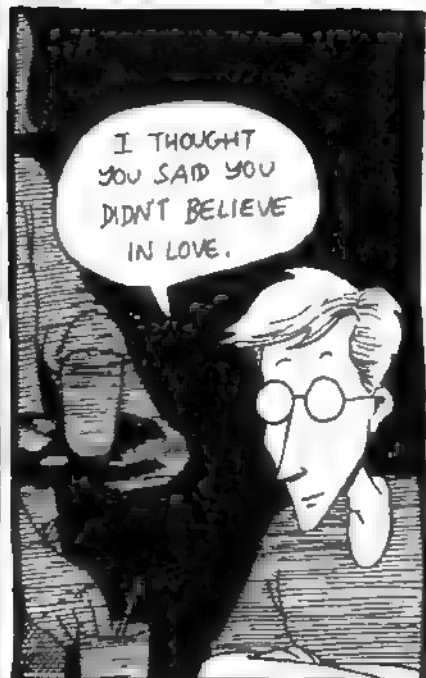


"WELL, THERE WAS ONE TIME SALLY AND I DID IT IN MY DORM ROOM WHILE ED WAS SLEEPING IN THE BED FIVE FEET AWAY"

"ANOTHER TIME I WAS STAYING AT SALLY'S APARTMENT AND SHE AND HER ROOMMATE, WELL, LIKE MADE OUT IN FRONT OF ME."











MAN, I SHOULD
GOT ZONK TO
COME OVER.



ZONK'S A
ASSHOLE,
MARL.

YEAH, I KNOW.
BUT HE GOT SOME
GREAT MONKEY AND
I COULD SURE AS
SHIT NEED SOME.



YOU CHECK
THAT SKO HE'S
SHIMMIN' WITH?
SHIT.'



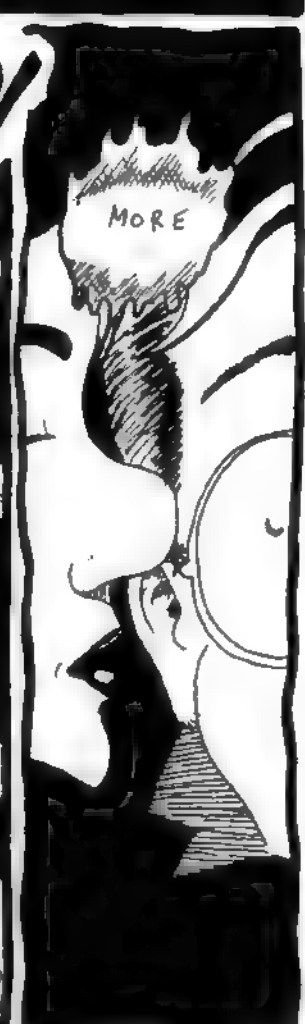
YEAH. SHE BE
CRAWLIN'

SHE GOT ALL
SORTS OF POX
IN 'ER BOX'
HAHA!

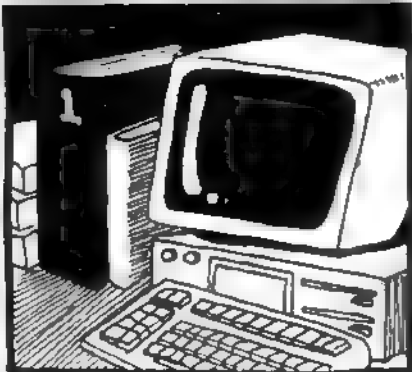
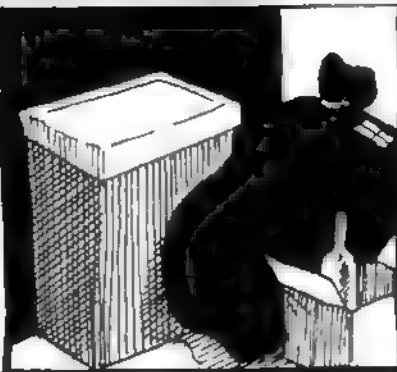
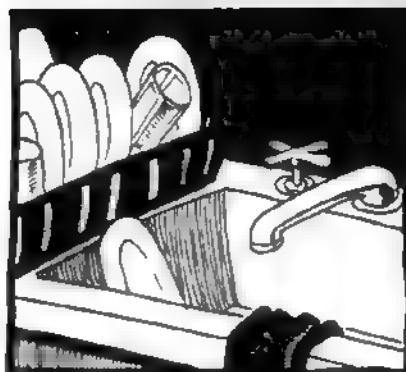


YEAH.

HES AN
ASSHOLE.

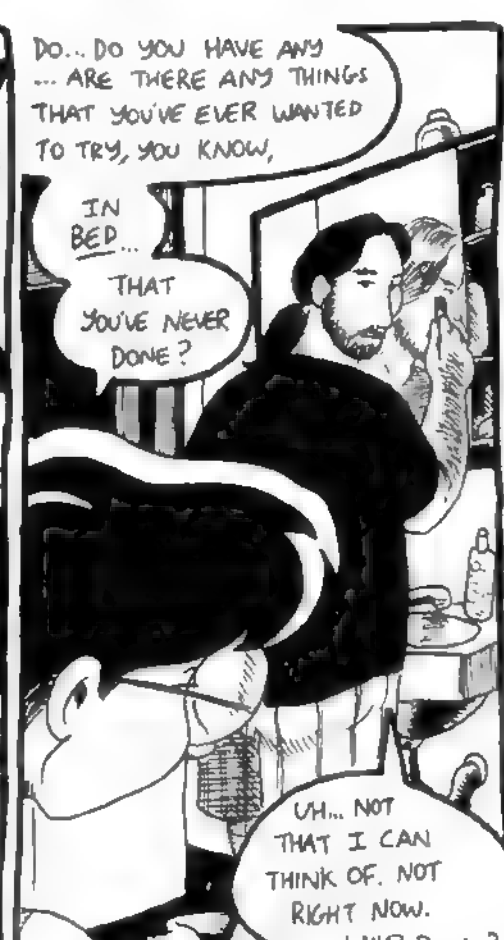








♡ Verbal Intercourse ♡







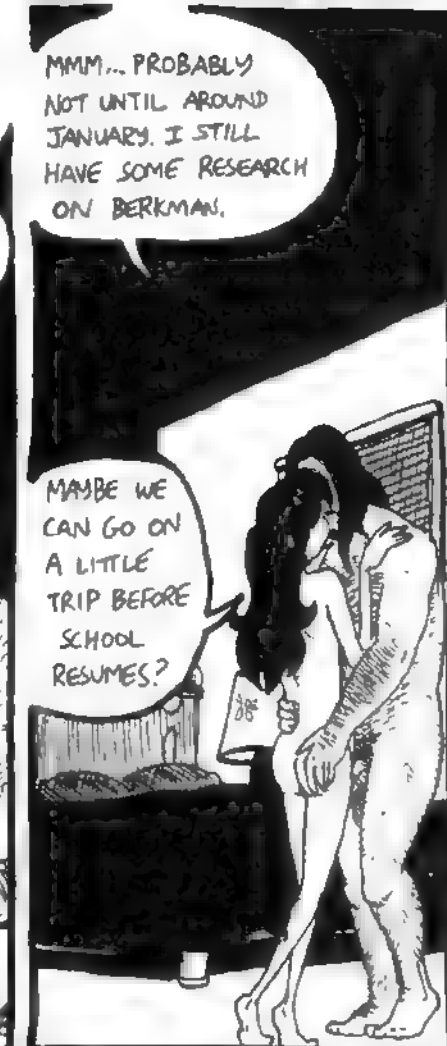
OH, THAT REMINDS...
OH, WAIT, SO THAT
MEANS YOU
TALKED TO
YOUR DAD?

NAH. HE JUST
LEFT A MESSAGE
ON THE MACHINE
WHAT WERE
YOU GOING
TO SAY?



REALLY GOOD NEWS! I TALKED TO
HERA AND SHE SAYS I CAN HAVE
A \$ 500 ADVANCE AS SOON
AS I HAND IN THE FIRST
FIFTY PAGES! ISN'T THAT
SUPER?

THAT'S GREAT!
WHEN DO YOU
THINK THAT'LL
BE?



MMM... PROBABLY
NOT UNTIL AROUND
JANUARY. I STILL
HAVE SOME RESEARCH
ON BERKMAN.

MAYBE WE
CAN GO ON
A LITTLE
TRIP BEFORE
SCHOOL
RESUMES?



THAT WOULD BE GREAT! MAYBE
GO BACK TO THAT PLACE WITH
THE FIREPLACE IN LIGHTFIELD?

I WAS ON THE L-TRAIN
TODAY? MAN, IT WAS LIKE
THE TRAIN OF THE
DAMNED!

SHEESH!



THERE WAS THIS WOMAN WITH
A GAGGLE OF BRATTY LITTLE
SHITS AND THEY'RE RUNNING
AROUND SCREAMING AND CRY-
ING AND YELLING AND BUMPING
IN TO PEOPLE...

AT ONE POINT TWO
OF THEM WERE ROLLING
AROUND OF THE FLOOR!

I'M THINKING: "HOMELESS
PEOPLE PISS ON THOSE
FLOORS, GUYS."



EECH. I SOAK MY
SNEAKERS IN ALCOHOL
FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS
IF I EVEN STEP IN
THE L-TRAIN!

I KNOW. BUT
DON'T THEY... WHY
ON EARTH WOULD YOU
LET YOUR STUPID
KID DO THAT, YOU
KNOW?

PEOPLE ARE AWFUL,
WHAT CAN I TELL
YOU?

YOU KNOW
WHAT ONE OF MY
BRILLIANT YOUNG MINDS
WROTE IN AN ESSAY
THIS WEEK?

I GIVE
UP. WHAT?

THAT ABRAHAM LINCOLN
FREED THE SLAVES IN 1964
WHEN HE SIGNED THE
"EMASCULATION
PROCLAMATION".

OOH BOY,
FREED THE
SLAVES
OF WHAT?

IT AMAZES ME, AND THESE
ARE COLLEGE KIDS. ARE
THEY LEARNING ANYTHING
IN HIGH SCHOOL?

COME ON,
YOU SAID YOU
HATED HISTORY
UNTIL YOU WENT
TO COLLEGE.

YOU HAVE TO KEEP TRYING,
BALDOO MAYBE YOU'LL BE
THE ONE TO TURN THEM
ON TO IT.

I MEAN, IF
YOU COULD CONVERT
ME, ANYTHING IS
POSSIBLE.

I KNOW. I GUESS I JUST
WORRY THAT ITS...
IRRELEVANT. WHO THE HECK
CARES ABOUT ELIHU ROOT
OR CRISPUS ATTUCKS OR
WILLIAM MCKINLEY IN THE
AGE OF THE INFOTAINMENT
SEWER HIGHWAY?

MCKINLEY... HE
INVENTED THE COTTON
GIN, RIGHT?

NO, HE WAS
PRESID-- OH, HA
HA HA. VERY
AMUSING.



I'M GOING TO GET UP AND HAVE A DRINK.

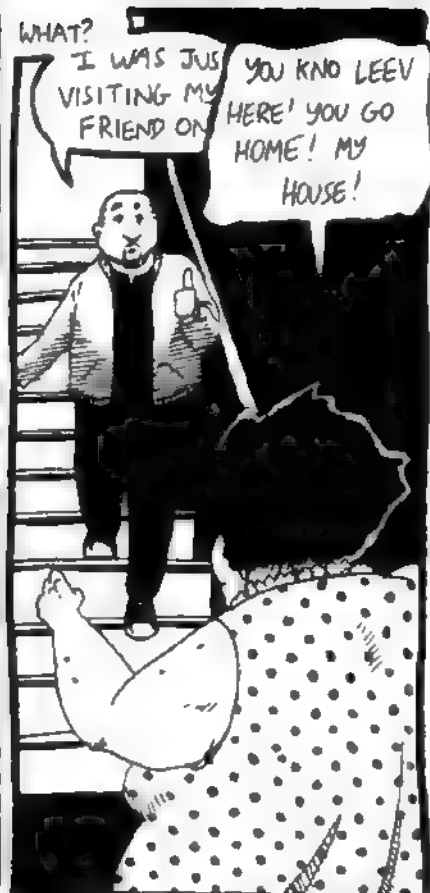
YOU WANT ANYTHING?

NAH. I MEAN, I'LL COME WITH YOU.

HAPPY FIVE YEAR-IVERSARY, CUTEST OF PIES!

MM HMM!

KLINK



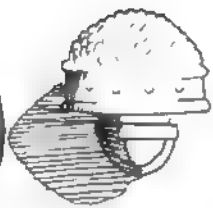
• Come on Knock on our Door! •





WHY MRS. TWEED,
I THOUGHT THAT
WAS YOUR RANTING
I HEARD. TO WHAT
DO WE OWE

TWO DAYS!
YOU NOA PAY
VRENT! YOU
VRENT PAY
NOW! AHN!
AHN!



OH! THAT'S RIGHT!
TODAY'S THE THIRD.
IT MUST'VE SLIPPED
OUR MINDS.

OKAY, OKAY, DON'T LETS
GET ALL EXCITED. I'LL
HAVE MY HUSBAND BRING
THE MONEY UP AS SOON
AS HE GOES TO THE BANK.

OKAY, WE'RE
DONE. STEPHEN WILL
BE UP IN A BIT, OKAY?

BYE!

BYE!

WHYA YOU
NO PAY? WHY?
WHY?! NO!!
NO! YOU PAY!
MY HOUSE!

ALDA TIME
YOU HAVE PEOPLE
COMOVER! UP
DOWN STAIRS!
BOOM BOOM
BOOM!

AHN! YOU
PAY VRENT I
CALL POLICA!

DON'T FALL
DOWN THE
STAIRS AND
BREAK YOUR
NECK OR
ANYTHING.



As John Lennon tuned his guitar, part of him wanted to throw up.

Ever since the Beatles officially broke up in 1970, they had been pestered by the question: When Will You Get Back Together? Paul McCartney's shocking assassination by a lone nut working for the IRA in 1980 seemed to put the question at last to rest. What will it take to have a Beatles reunion? The joke went. Three more bullets.

Yet, here they were, in a recording studio. Three old men trying desperately to sound like they did thirty years ago.

They all had solo careers, of course, with varying degrees of failure and success. But as time went on and McCartney's ghost loomed larger and larger, it seemed hopeless to compete. Sure, John had had some hits (notably his 1981 tribute to McCartney "And Now You Sleep") but more and more the comparisons came up: Paul had been the genius behind the Beatles. Paul took John's cranky tirades and made them prese

Everybody loves you when you're young, a wise young man once sang...

It seemed with every interview Paul would defend himself. Sure, Paul was behind Sgt. Pepper, but without John's psychedel... and I've went nowhere. Sure, Paul was the one who welded together the "good parts" of Abbey Road, but hadn't John...broken...

"All right, let's get this fucker started." Lennon sighed to Brian Eno in the... The tape started. It was a rough (very rough) demo tape of an unfinished McCartney song, "Check My Machine." Lennon winced inside. Even by Paul's standards, this song was pure rubbish. But after years of Linda, Paul's hated widow, scraping the barrel of "Unreleased" and "Never before heard demos" this was all that was left.

Lennon's recent recordings were going virtually straight into the bargain bins nowadays, but this piece of garbage was going to be the centerpiece of the NEW BEATLES. All three surviving Beatles were hoping it would give their sales a much needed boost. Lennon couldn't quite see the logic in that. He stopped touring in 1989 for exactly that reason. He was tired of being the one who went crazy that the crowd would leap to its feet when he dragged out a Beatles song, but he could practically taste the disappointment when he played the opening chords of "Serve Yourself" from his 1987 album "Europe on Five Cords." He would put on a brave face about it, saying he didn't care what people liked and all that, but inside it was killing him.

He has once told a journalist that he could...

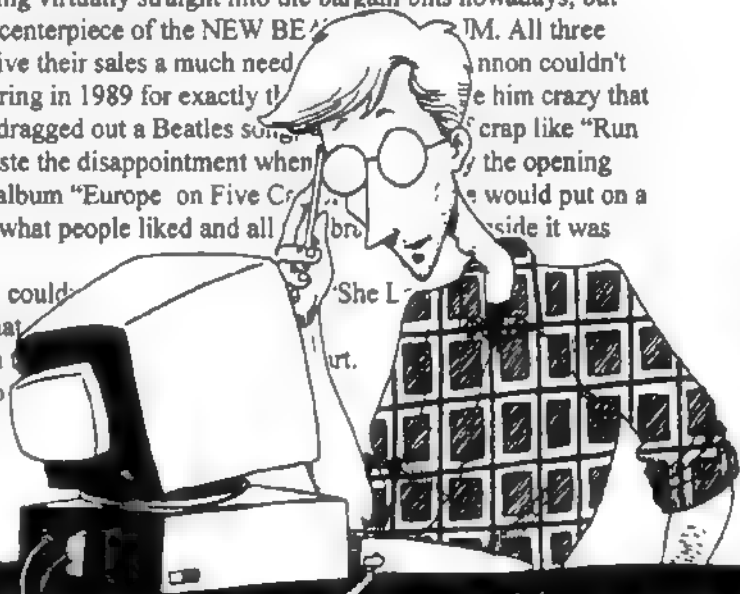
was thirty. Thirty! He was nearly twice that age.

"For Christ's sake," he muttered, in a low voice.

"What's wrong, John?" said Eno from behind him. Lennon sighed again.

SHERMAN?

YEAH,
COME ON
IN.



HOWS IT
COMING?

AH, I'M JUST
SCREWING AROUND

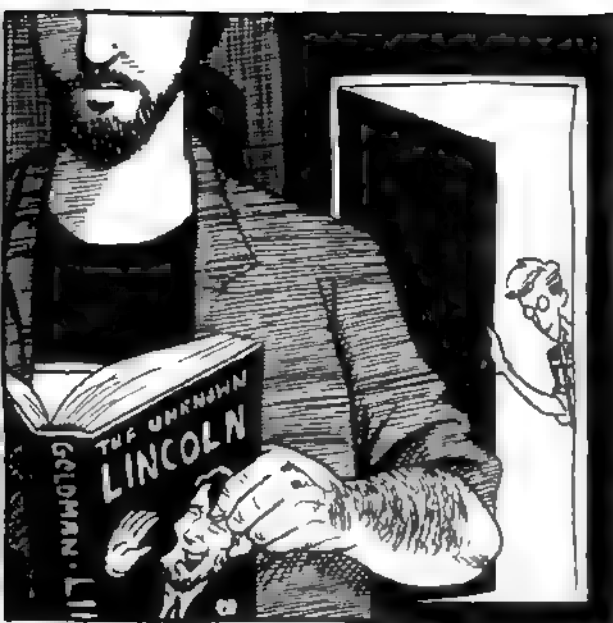
WHAT'S UP?
READY FOR ME
TO KICK YOUR
ASS AT CHESS
AGAIN?

HABA, YEAH, RIGHT.
ACTUALLY, I'M
HERE FOR THE
RENT

MRS. TWEED'S
ON THE RAMPAGE
AGAIN.

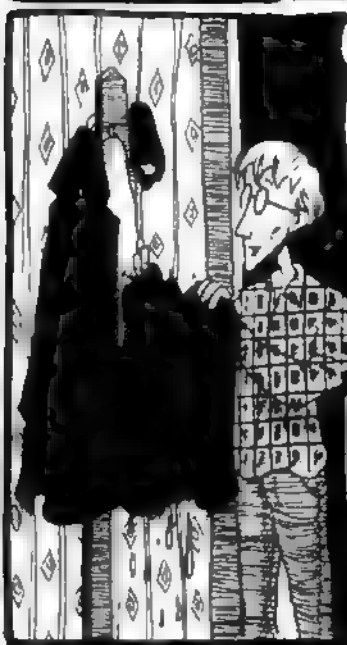
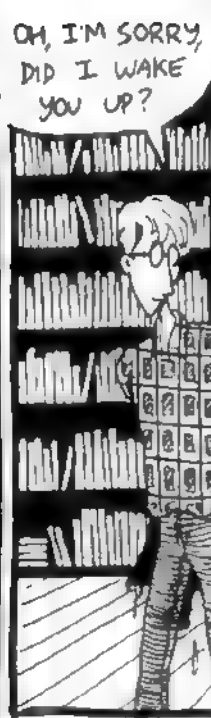














GREAT, SO WHERE DO YOU WANT TO



UM.

WHAT?



YOU TOLD ME SHERMAN PAID HIS RENT.



UM, HE... I MEAN.

NO, WAIT, IT'S MY FAULT...



I EXPLAINED TO STEPHEN THAT DOROTHY OWES ME..



"DOROTHY?"

BEATRICE LESTRADE

IS SOMEHOW INVOLVED IN THIS?



SURE, SHE NEEDED TO...



GRRRRRR!!!



EVERY TIME I TRY TO GET OUT, SHE PULLS US RIGHT BACK IN!!



JANE, DON'T



DON'T "JANE, DON'T" ME! AS LONG AS SHE STAYED OUT OF OUR LIVES, I'D KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT!

BUT NOW SHE'S GOT US FIGHTING, SHE'S GOT YOU LYING TO ME, IT'S LIKE SHE NEVER LEFT!!



UH... WHAT
ARE YOU GUYS
TALKING
ABOUT?



SIGH
SHERM, DID BEA--
DID DOROTHY EVER
TELL YOU THE CIRCUM-
STANCES OF HER
MOVING OUT?



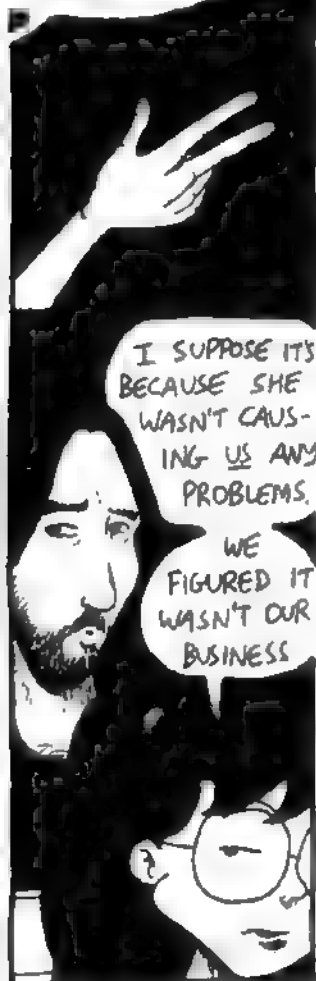
YEAH, SHE
FOUND A BETTER
PLACE IN MANHAT-
TAN AND MOVED
OUT. SO WHAT?



WELL, IT'S NOT
EXACTLY TRUE.
SHE LEFT BECAUSE
WE KICKED HER OUT.

REALLY?
... WHY?

WHY? BECAUSE SHE'S
A SLOB, SHE DRINKS
WAY TOO MUCH, SHE'S
DANGEROUSLY IRRE-
SPONSIBLE, SHE WAS
TWO MONTHS LATE
WITH HER RENT SHE
OWES US \$65'S, SHE
NEVER...



I SUPPOSE IT'S
BECAUSE SHE
WASN'T CAUS-
ING US ANY
PROBLEMS.

WE
FIGURED IT
WASN'T OUR
BUSINESS



WHAT DOES
THAT MEAN?
"DANGEROUSLY
IRRESPONSIBLE?"



SHE WOULD LEAVE
THE DOORS UNLOCKED,
SHE'D FORGET TO
SHUT OFF HER STUPID
CURLING IRON
ONCE SHE ...



WHY ARE YOU ALL OF
A SUDDEN TELLING ME
ALL THIS SHIT? IF
SHE'S SO HORRIBLE
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY
ANYTHING
BEFORE
NOW?



WELL, MAYBE YOU
FIGURED RIGHT,
MAYBE IT IS NONE
OF YOUR DAMN
BUSINESS!

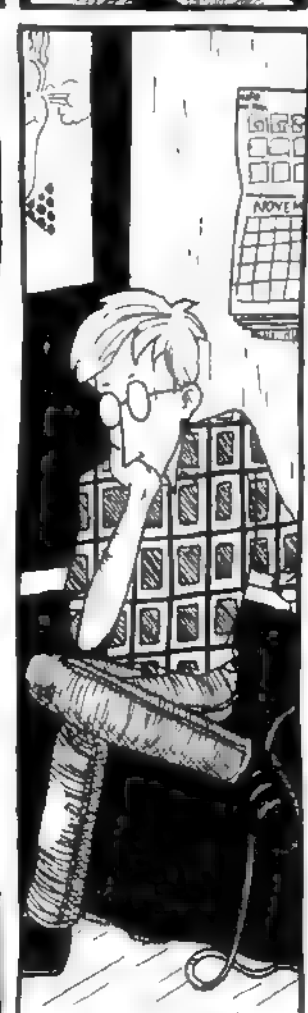
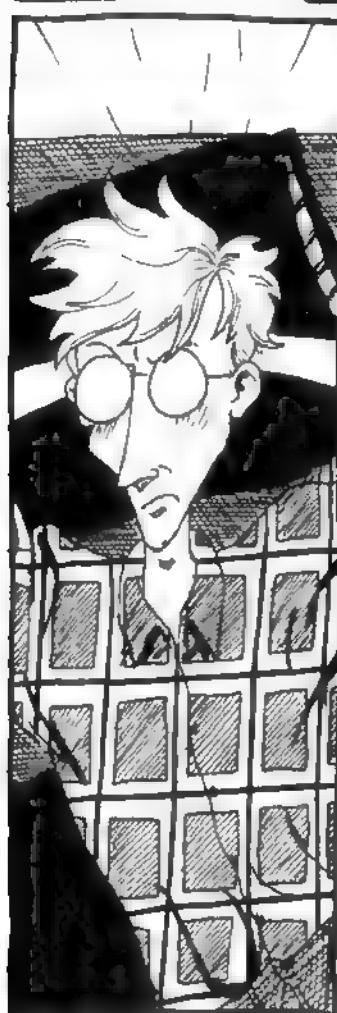
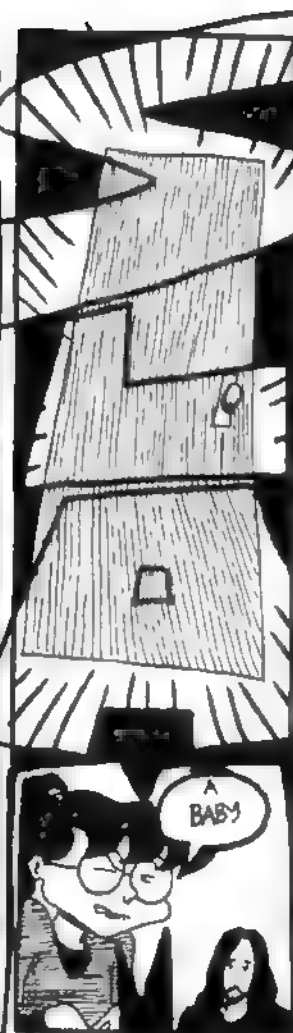
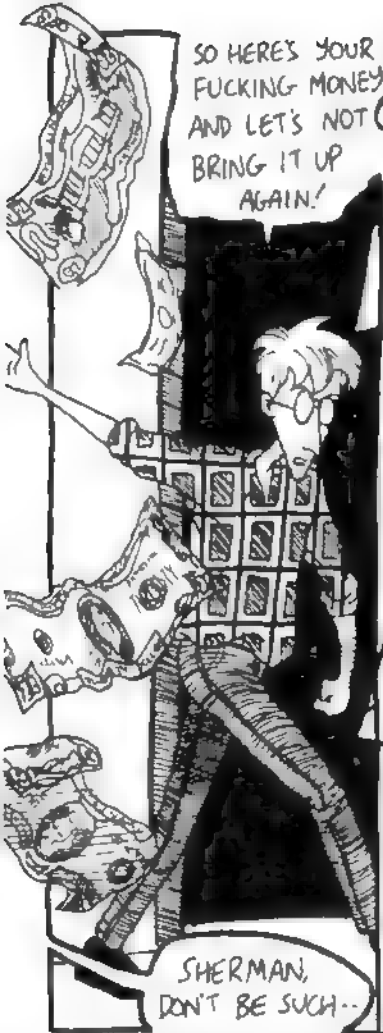


SHERM, DON'T GET
MAD AT ME! WE'RE
TRYING TO HELP
YOU!



HOW AM I
SUPPOSED TO
REACT TO
YOU
SLAMMING
MY GIRL-
FRIEND?

"OH, THANK
YOU, YOUR
HIGHNESS,
FOR BESTOWING
THIS WISDOM
ON ME!!"

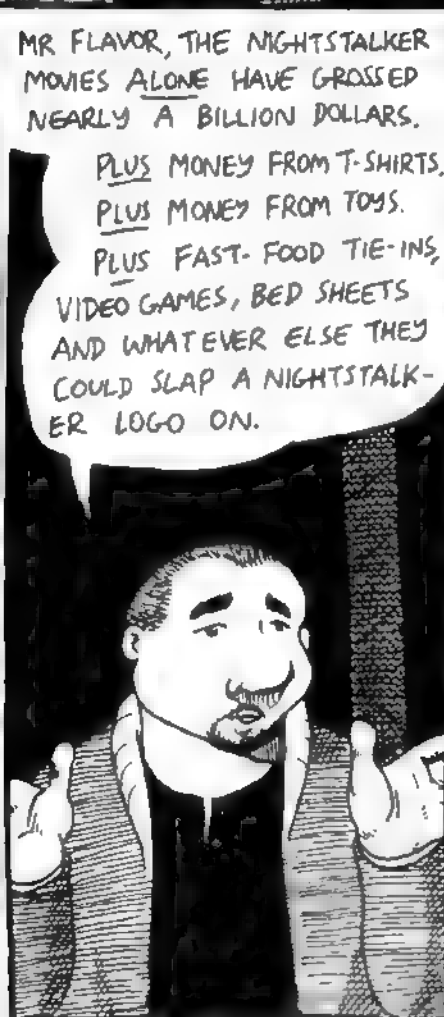
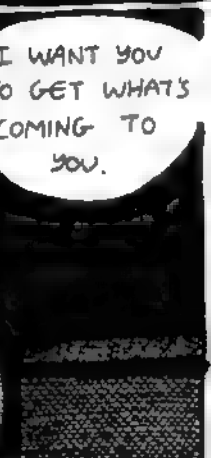


ED QUIXOTE

WHAT THE
HELL'RE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?

"RESCUE
ME" FROM
WHO?!





I'M NOT SAYING YOU'RE STUPID. WHEN YOU MADE UP NIGHTSTALKER YOU HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT HE'D BE WORTH

IT WAS A DIFFERENT WORLD THEN.

UH, WHY? DID YOU SIGN A DEAL?

OF COURSE I DID.

"IN 1944, I WAS TWENTY YEARS OLD."

"I SOLD THEM NIGHTSTALKER FOR \$55."



BLOP
BLOP



MR. FLAVOR, I THINK WE CAN SHAME ZOOM COMICS INTO...

"SHAME THEM?"

WHAT AM I, SOME DAMN CHARITY CASE? AND HOW WILL IT LOOK, ME EMBARRASSING ZOOM IN PUBLIC?

I'LL NEVER WORK IN COMICS AGAIN!

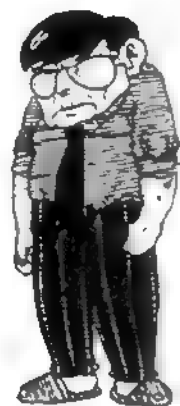
UH, MR. FLAVOR, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, THE LAST WORK YOU DID FOR ZOOM COMICS WAS EIGHT YEARS AGO.



A SIX PAGE "MAN-WOLF" BACK UP STORY IN "ATAZ. FORCE" # 247.



I...
I, UH,
CHECKED.



MR. FLAVOR, AFTER WE WIN, YOU'LL BE RICH, YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO DRAW ANOTHER V.D. POSTER OR CEREAL BOX OR COLORING BOOK FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!



YEAH, BUT THEY GOT HUNDREDS OF SHARKS, HUNDREDS OF LAWYERS WORKIN' FOR 'EM.'



I ONLY GOT TWO THINGS, JACK AND SHIT.

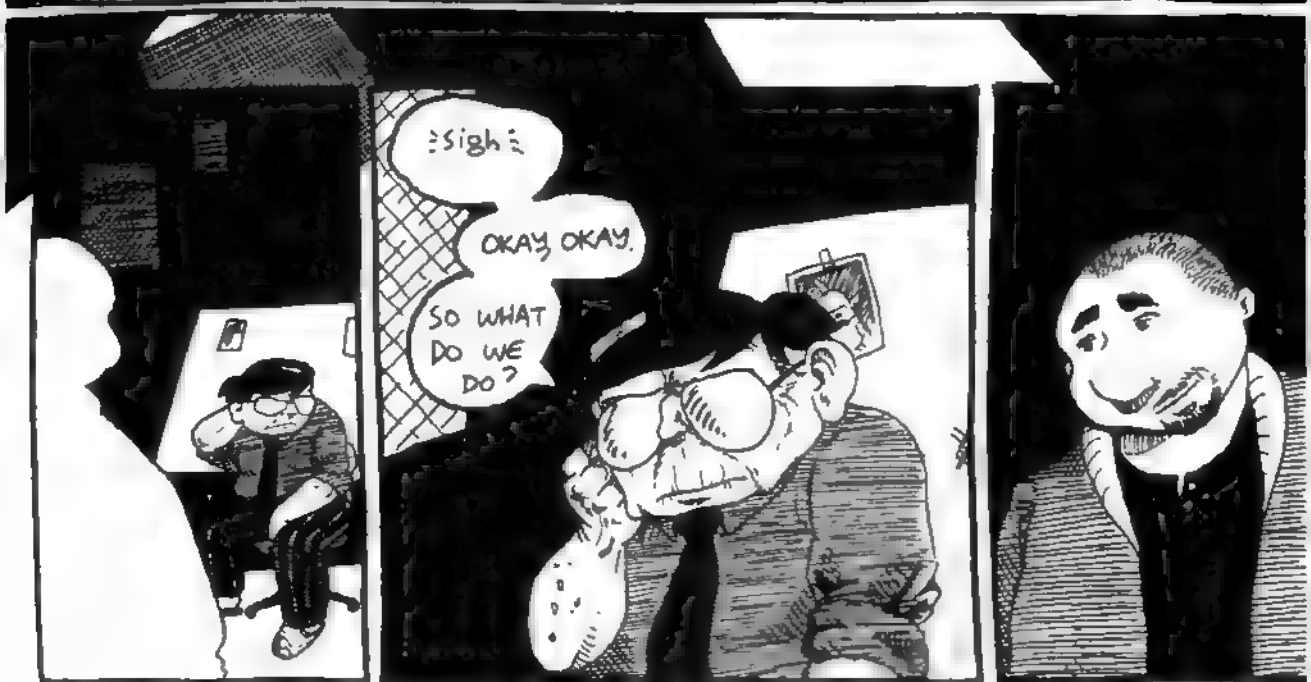
AND JACK JUST LEFT THE BUILDING.

SEE, THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG.



FIRST OF ALL, YOU'RE A SWEET OLD MAN, A LITTLE GUY DICKED OVER BY A BIG COMPANY.

THE MEDIA--OR A JURY--LOVE THAT KIND OF STUFF.



Not guilty



I KNOW, I KNOW I WAS A BIT AGOG MYSELF.

YOU DON'T BELIEVE HER, DO YOU?

SHIT, I ALWAYS KNEW SHE HATED ME, BUT I DIDN'T THINK THIS MUCH!

NO. SHHLRP

I DON'T BELIEVE HER.

CAREFUL, THIS IS STILL A BIT HOT.



FIRST OF ALL, AS FAR AS THE MONEY GOES, I TOLD HER I'D PAY THEM AS SOON AS I COULD!

I JUST SENT THEM A CHECK FOR \$100 LIKE LAST MONTH!

AS FOR MY BEING AN "ALCOHOLIC" ...

DOROTHY, I SAID I DON'T BE--

MISS HIGH AND MIGHTY CLEAN-AND-SOBER THINKS ANYONE WHO'S EVER TAKEN A DRINK ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME IS A DRUNK!

HELL, SHE PROBABLY THINKS YOU'RE A DRUNK, TOO!





OH, NO, SHE REALLY DISLIKES ME ITS-- UM-- I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD.



SHOULD WHAT?



NO, NO, I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU. NEVER MIND, ITS IRRELEVANT



TELL ME WHAT?



NO, IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR TO STEPHEN. FORGET IT!

HEH.



STEPHEN? WHAT'S HE GOT TO DO--



ONCE WHILE JANE WAS OVER HER FOLKS' HOUSE HE MADE A PASS AT ME.







IF YOU
COULD HAVE
BRUNCH
WITH ANYONE
LIVING OR
DEAD, WHO
WOULD IT
BE
?



OKES-DOKE, SO NIGHTSTALKER
WILL APPEAR IN THE SEVEN
ISSUE CROSSOVER WITH
RAZOR BURN.

WE SHOULD
GET GARNER TO
INK THE COVER
OF #22.

SILKO WILL GET
HER NEW COSTUME IN
"RAIDERS" #152, RIGHT
AFTER TAZER COMES
BACK FROM THE
FORGOTTEN ZONE

CAN WE
GET THAT IN
BEFORE "ATAC
FORCE" #318?

UH, ACTUALLY J.C., I
NEED TAZER FOR MY
SHARKSKIN STORY IN
"CAPTAIN COMPOUND"
#13, SO COULD WE
POSSIBLY--

I'M
SORRY,
J.C.?

PAULIE, MY LAD!
WHAT IS IT,
WHAT'S SO
URGENT?

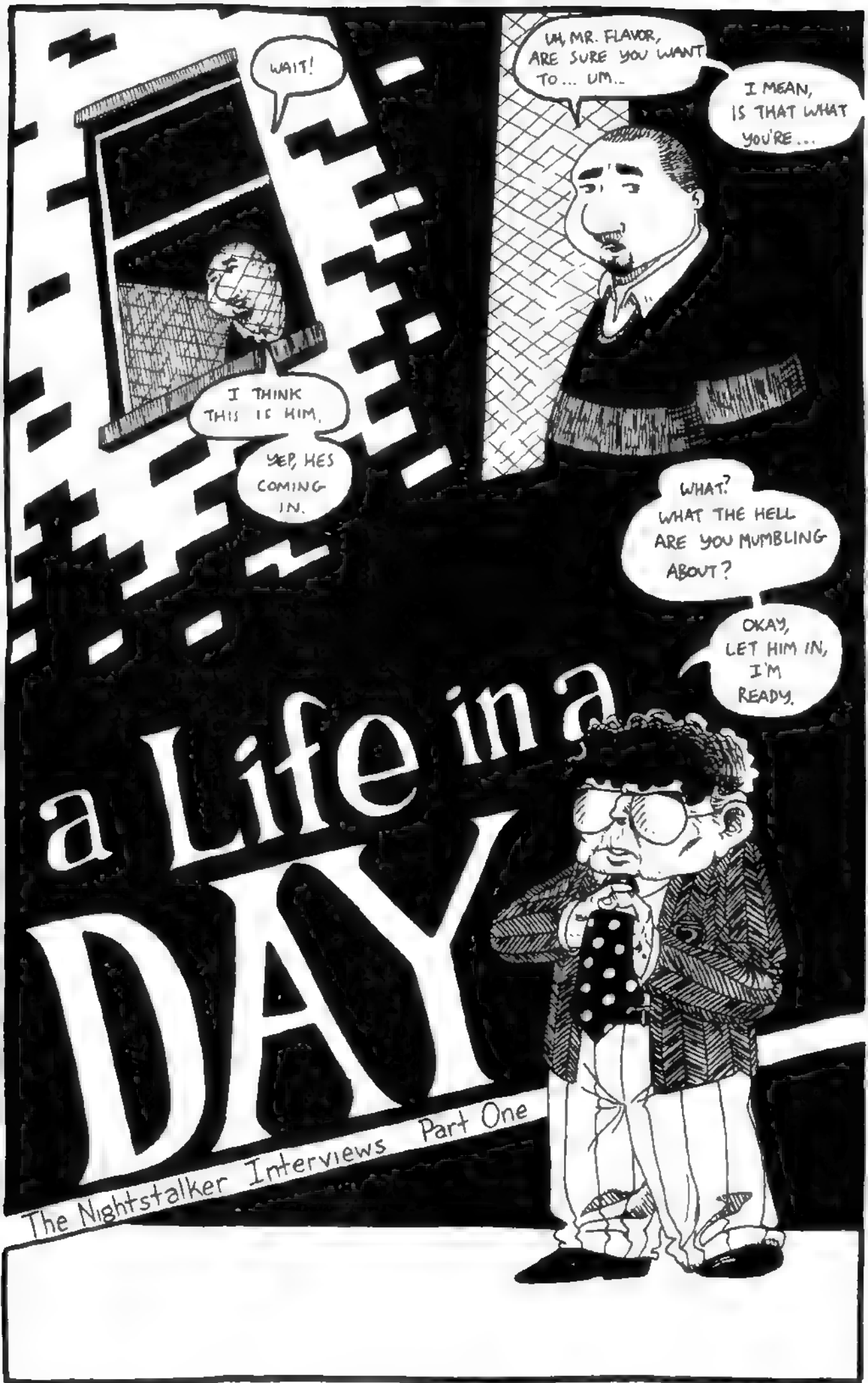
OOM

J.C., I JUST GOT OFF
THE PHONE WITH TOM
SALMON FROM "COLLECTOR'S
WORLD." IT'S ABOUT
IRVING FLAVOR.

IT COULD
BE
TROUBLE.

IRVING
FLAVOR

IRVING
FLAVOR



WAIT!

UH, MR. FLAVOR,
ARE SURE YOU WANT
TO ... UM...

I MEAN,
IS THAT WHAT
YOU'RE ...

I THINK
THIS IS HIM.

YEP, HE'S
COMING
IN.

WHAT?
WHAT THE HELL
ARE YOU MUMBLING
ABOUT?

OKAY,
LET HIM IN,
I'M
READY.

a Life in a DAY

The Nightstalker Interviews Part One



HELLO, MR. FLAVOR! MY NAME IS ARCHIE PUPKIN III, I'M A WRITER FOR "COMICS WORLD", COMICDOM'S NUMBER ONE NEWS MAGAZINE!

HILDY KIERKEGAARD.

H'LO.

IT IS TRULY AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, SIR!

THIS IS MY LOVELY AND TALENTED ASSISTANT

YEAH, HI THERE, MR. PUPKIN! A REAL PLEASURE!

UH, COULD I GET YOU GUYS ANYTHING BEFORE YOU START? SOME COFFEE? OR...

HOHO! PLEASE MR. FLAVOR, CALL ME ARCHIE!

NO, THANK YOU, WE STOPPED AT A LOVELY DOUGHNUT SHOP IN GLENDALE PRIOR TO OUR ARRIVAL.

SO, MR. FLAVOR, SHALL WE GET CRACKING?

HILDY?



JEEZ, WELL, LET'S SEE...
I GUESS THE FIRST TIME
I MET SIMON LEBLANC
WAS 19... 1940? SOMEWHERE
AROUND THERE. I WAS JUST
A KID... SIXTEEN OR
SOMETHING.

HE WAS A
CUSTOMER AT MY
DAD'S SHOP

WHY SHOULD
WE BUTT IN?
LET THE LIMEYS
FIGHT THEIR
OWN WAR!

NOW, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU
REMEMBER, BUT AT THE TIME,
SIMON WAS A HOTSHOT EDITOR
AT WORLD PRESS. THEY'RE
DEFUNCT NOW, BUT AT THE
TIME THEY WERE A VERY
BIG, VERY POPULAR COMIC
PUBLISHER.

YOU'RE PROBABLY
RIGHT, MR. LEBLANC

DO YOU
WANT
CUFFS?

SO ANYWAY, MY
FATHER HAD TOLD HIM
THAT I WAS INTERESTED
IN BEING AN ARTIST
SO SIMON ASKED TO
SEE SOME OF MY
WORK.

THIS STUFF
AIN'T BAD! NOT BAD
AT ALL, KID!

SAY, WHY
DON'T YOU COME
BY THE OFFICE
NEXT WEEK AND
MEET THE FELLAS!

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO ASK ME TWICE, THAT'S
FOR DAMN SURE! SO, I GO DOWN AND I
GET TO MEET ALL THESE ARTISTS!
THEN SIMON TAKES ME ASIDE...

IRVING, I'M
GOING TO TELL YOU
SOMETHING NO ONE
ELSE KNOWS I'M LEAVING
WORLD COMICS AND
STARTING MY OWN
COMPANY.

WHY SHOULD
I SPEND MY LIFE
MAKING SOMEONE
ELSE RICH?

IRVING, I WANT
YOU TO COME WORK FOR
ME. I NEED A SIX
PAGE STORY BY
MONDAY. CAN
DO IT?

MY FATHER
HAD A SAYING: "WHEN
OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS,
DON'T KNOCK OPPORTUNITY!"

WHAT ELSE COULD I DO? I WENT HOME, MADE UP A CHARACTER, AND BAM! DID A SIX PAGE STORY! IT WAS... I'VE DONE A MILLION COMICS SINCE THEN, BUT THAT ONE... I THINK IT WAS MY FAVORITE. YOU ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR FIRST TIME, AS THEY SAY.

IRVING! GO TO BED, IT'S 1:30 IN THE MORNING!

I NEED YOU TO HELP ME OPEN THE STORE TOMORROW!

SO THAT'S HOW YOU INVENTED NIGHTSTALKER, WITH THAT STORY?

OH, NO, NO, NO. THIS WAS A CHARACTER CALLED DR. INVISIBLE. I ONLY DID A FEW STORIES WITH HIM.



HE WAS A MAGICIAN WHO COULD TURN HIS BODY INVISIBLE TO FIGHT CRIME.

HMMM, I LIKE IT, KID, IT'S ALL RIGHT.

WELCOME TO ZOOM COMICS!

IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS FUNNY, EVERYONE WHO WORKED FOR SIMON AND HIS NEW COMPANY WAS EITHER REALLY OLD OR REALLY YOUNG!

IS THAT WHEN YOU WORKED WITH DICKIE SLAB?

YEAH, AND IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME -- BEFORE THE WAR -- THAT HE FIRST DID MAJOR JUSTICE

YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES!
ZOOM
COMICS!



WHO IS DR. INVISIBLE?

ACTUALLY, IT WAS BECAUSE OF
DICKIE THAT I ... THAT I MADE
UP THE NIGHTSTALKER TO
BEGIN WITH!

HE WAS WORKING ON HIS MAJOR
JUSTICE COMIC -- THIS WAS IN
1942 AND WHAT WITH THE WAR
GOING ON AND ALL, IT WAS A
BIG HIT

ANYWAYS ONE TIME WE'RE SITTING AROUND
ZOOM'S OFFICE -- I'D BEEN DOING VARIOUS
BOOKS AT THE TIME, WORKING ON A LOT
OF DIFFERENT CHARACTERS AND WHAT NOT,
SO WE'RE TALKING AND...

GEE WHIZ, IRV!
I FORGOT ABOUT THAT
THREE PAGER SIMON
GAVE ME TO DO FOR
FRIDAY!

WHAT AM I
GONNA DO FOR
A VILLAIN?

AHH! QUIT YOUR
BELLY-ACHING! HERE:
HERE'S A BAD GUY
FOR YOU!

AND THAT
WAS IT, I
MADE HIM UP,
RIGHT ON THE
SPOT!

SO DICKIE USED HIM FOR THAT
ISSUE (I THINK IT WAS PUNCH
OUT! #27) AND THAT WAS IT.

OF COURSE, HE WAS KIND OF
DIFFERENT THEN, WHAT WITH
HIS GUN AND ALL THAT
NAZI STUFF AND EVERYTHING.
BUT THE IDEA WAS THERE

BUT LIKE I SAID THE STORY CAME
AND WENT AND I DIDN'T REALLY THINK
ABOUT IT UNTIL A FEW MONTHS LATER.

OH, BY THE WAY:
NEXT MONTH WE'RE
LAUNCHING ANOTHER
TITLE. I'LL NEED
A TEN PAGER BY
THE FIFTEENTH.

:Gulp!:

HAVE A
GOOD WEEKEND,
IRV!

NOW, YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND, BACK IN THEM DAYS, IT WAS A LOT DIFFERENT. THEY DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT WHAT YOU DID, AS LONG AS KIDS KEPT BUYING IT AND IT MADE MONEY. OTHER THAN THAT, YOU HAD TOTAL FREEDOM.

SO SIMON DIDN'T CARE WHAT THE HELL WE DID, STORYWISE, WE SURE AS HELL HAD TO FILL UP A LOT OF PAGES QUICK! BUT I'LL BE DAMNED IF IT DIDN'T TEACH US ALL DISCIPLINE! YOU CAN'T DO THAT MANY PAGES AND NOT GET GOOD.

SO SIMON TELLS ME I GOT TO DO THIS NEW STORY, I DO WHAT ALL GREAT ARTISTS DO FROM TIME TO TIME.

I RECYCLED.

I TOOK THE NAZI BAD GUY, CHANGED HIS COLORS A BIT, DITCHED THE NAZI SHIT AND THERE YOU GO.

I DID A COUPLE OF STORIES WITH THE NIGHTSTALKER WHEN

UH, YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, SIMON?

IRV! COME ON IN, PAL!

THE NEWS GUYS ARE TELLING ME GOOD THINGS ABOUT THIS NIGHTS... NIGHT.

NIGHTSTALKER?

RIIIIGHT RIGHT.

SO THIS CHARACTER'S PROVING TO BE KIND OF POPULAR FOR US. SO!

I'M GIVING YOU AND THE NIGHTSTALKER YOUR OWN BOOK AND!

YOU'LL BE GETTING A TIDY LITTLE RAISE!

I WAS ONLY THE SECOND "ZOOMER" TO GET MY OWN BOOK

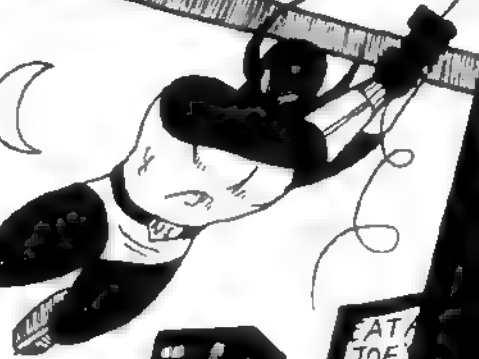
THANKS ALOT, SIMON!

I WAS ONE WEEK SHY OF MY NINETEENTH BIRTHDAY

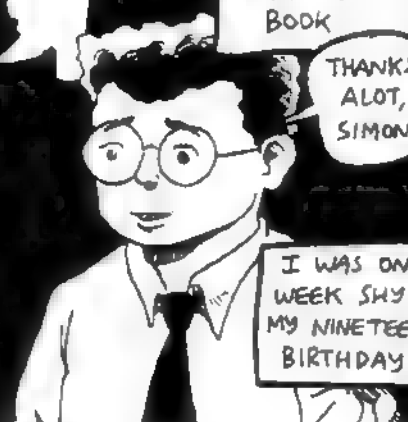
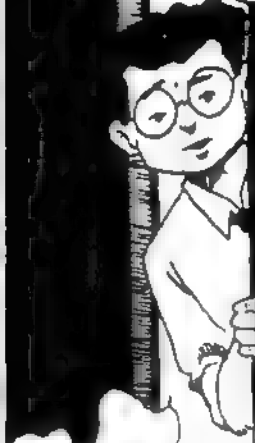
No. 1
SUMMER
10¢

'BEST COMICS

BUY BONDS



EAT A JOE



I REALLY WORKED HARD ON THE BOOK, TOO, TRYING TO KEEP IT FRESH AND EXCITING. I EVEN MADE MYSELF A PROMISE: I'D INTRODUCE A NEW VILLAIN EVERY OTHER ISSUE.

MOST OF 'EM WERE DUMB, BUT SOME WERE GREAT... THE BRAIN, RAE-GUARD, AND OF COURSE ADMIRAL ARMOR.'

THE BOOK WAS A HIT. SIMON GAVE ME ANOTHER RAISE THE NEXT YEAR

Y'KNOW, WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT ... WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT.



THOSE WERE PROBABLY THE HAPPIEST DAYS IN MY LIFE



SO -
WHAT WENT
WRONG?

AROUND JUNE OF 1944, I TOOK MY GIRL SOPHIE TO THE PICTURES TO SEE "GASLIGHT" AT THE BROOKLYN SHOWPLACE.

(IT'S NOT THERE ANYMORE - THEY TORE IT DOWN TO MAKE A SUPER-MARKET IN '72)

IS THIS
TOO CLOSE?



BUT ANYWAYS, BACK IN THEM DAYS THEY USED TO SHOW NEWS REELS AND CARTOONS AND ALL SORTS OF SHIT BEFORE THE FEATURE.



SO, DID YOU
TELL MARIA ABOUT
US GETTING...

OHMYGOODNESS!
IRVING, LOOK AT
THE SERIAL!

ISN'T THAT
YOUR SUPER
HERO?!

SHHHH!

AND IT
WAS.

COME ON,
MOONBOY! WE'VE
GOT TO GET TO
THE MUNITIONS
FACTORY!

I REMEMBER LOOKING
UP AT THAT SCREEN...
IT WAS LIKE SOMETHING
OUT OF A DREAM, SEEING
HIM, ALL THREE-DEE. IT
... I WAS GOD DAMNED
HYPMATIZED, IN A TRANCE
UNTIL SOPHIE TALKED.
SHE SAID "MY GOODNESS"

MY GOODNESS,
IRV! NOW THAT YOUR
CHARACTER'S IN THE
PICTURES YOU'LL
BE RICH!

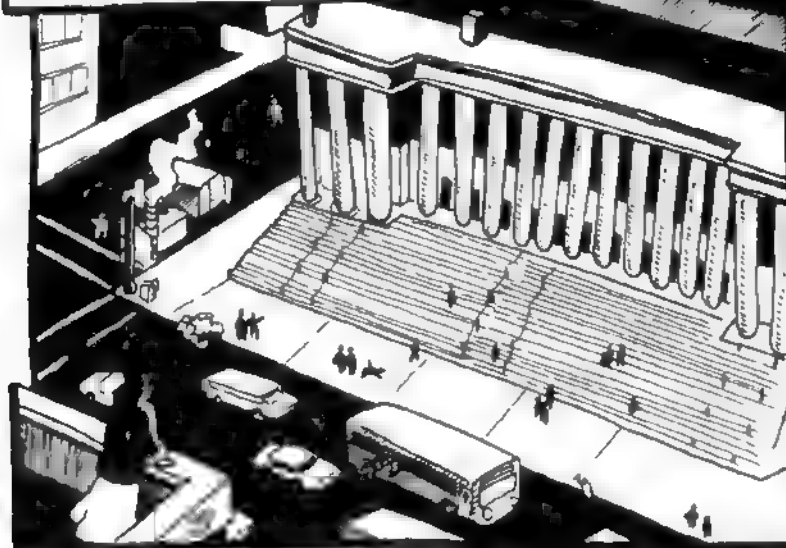
HUH?

THE NEXT MONDAY I WENT
IN TO WORK AND ASKED
SIMON WHAT WAS GOING
ON...

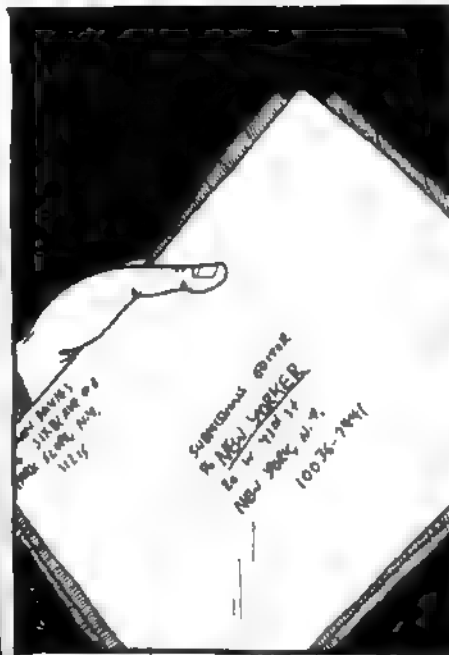
AW, JEEZ, IRV,
I REALLY WISH YOU
HADN'T SEEN THAT.



MEANWHILE, AT A POST OFFICE ON THE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN...



UH, HI, I'D LIKE TO MAIL THESE FIRST CLASS.



EXCUSE ME, LOVELY LADY!



WHAT KIND OF COUNTRY WOULD IT BE IF EVERYONE'S CAR WAS PINK?



IT'D BE A PINK CAR-NATION! HAHHA!











YEAH, SO I CONTINUED TO WORK FOR SIMON, FOR ZOOM FOR MANY YEARS AFTER THAT. I MOSTLY WORKED ON THE NIGHTSTALKER, BUT I ALSO HELPED DEVELOP SOME OTHER TITLES, EVEN TWO NIGHTSTALKER SPIN-OFFS, "CAPTAIN KNOCKOUT" AND "MOONBOY ADVENTURE".



IN 1950, I GOT MARRIED, WITH SIMON AS MY BEST MAN.

LIKE I SAID, THINGS WAS GOING REALLY GOOD. I WAS HAPPY, MAKIN' DECENT MONEY, MARRIED TO A GREAT GAL

THEN, ON THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING IN 1951, IT ALL FELL APART...

VAL? WASN'T SIMON SUPPOSED TO BE IN L.A.?

THE LIGHTS ON IN HIS OFFICE. WHAT GIVES?

MR LEBL - ?

oh my god



NOW, YOU'RE GONNA HEAR A LOT OF SHIT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, HOW SIMON WAS IN WITH THE MOB, HOW SIMON WAS SCREWING DICKIE'S WIFE, ALL SORTS OF CRAP. WELL, DONT YOU BELIEVE A WORD OF IT!

SIMON WAS A GREAT MAN. HE BUILT THIS COMPANY UP FROM NOTHING SURE, HE MADE A LOTTA ENEMIES, ALL SUCCESSFUL MEN DO. SO I JUST WANT TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. HE WAS A DECENT GUY

F IT WASNT FOR HIM, NONE OF US WOULD BE HERE TODAY



SO AFTER SIMON PASSED ON, HIS BROTHER JOEY TOOK OVER ZOOM. HE REALLY WASNT TOO CRAZY ABOUT THE IDEA, DIDNT REALLY HAVE HIS HEART INTO IT, SO AFTER TWO YEARS.

HEY, FELLAS, THIS IS MY NEPHEW JULIUS, SIMON'S SON.

HELLO

HOLY MOLEY! "LITTLE JULES?"

HEY! I AINT SEEN YOU SINCE YOU WAS THIS HIGH!

GENTLEMEN, I'VE
ARRANGED THIS LITTLE
MEETING TO LET YOU
KNOW THAT, AS OF NOW,
"LITTLE JULES" IS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF
ZOOM COMICS!

WELCOME ABOARD
JULES! THAT'S GREAT!
HEY! CAN I HAVE
A RAISE?

JOE,
YOU'RE
SHITTIN'
ME!

HAW
HAW!

PLEASE, CALL
ME J.C.

AND WE'LL TALK
ABOUT RAISES LATER.
I WANT A CHANCE
TO MEET WITH EACH
OF YOU ONE-ON-ONE

WE HAD THE MEETINGS, THE USUAL NEW-BOSS-
I-WANT-TO-BE-YOUR-FRIEND-LET'S-ALL-
WORK-HARD-AS-A-TEAM-BULLSHIT. HE ALSO
WAS BIG ON PUTTING OUT A LOT MORE KINDS
OF BOOKS, CUZ AT THIS POINT WE WERE
STILL DOIN' SUPERHERO STUFF AND SALES
WERE A BIT SLOW

I WANT YOU
TO DO A 10 PAGE HORROR
STORY FROM YOU BY THE
FIFTEENTH, OKAY?

I'VE HEARD
THESE "INJURY TO
THE EYE" STORIES
ARE BIG WITH
THE KIDS.

10 PAGES? UH,
BUT WHAT ABOUT
"NIGHTSTALKER"?
I WON'T HAVE
TIME...

TRY, UNTIL WE
KNOW WHAT WE'RE
DOING, TRYING OUT
THESE NEW DIRECTIONS,
ALL THE SUPERHERO
BOOKS ARE CUTTING
BACK TO A BI-MONTHLY
SCHEDULE.

DON'T WORRY,
WE'LL GIVE YOU
OTHER WORK TO
KEEP YOU BUSY

WHAT ELSE COULD I DO? I DID THE MURDER STORY THE BEST I COULD NEXT THING YOU KNOW, CHOP! CHOP! CHOP! JULES HAS CANCELLED HALF THE SUPERHERO TITLES AND PUT HORROR AND SCI-FI AND "TRUE CRIME" STUFF IN THEIR DAMN PLACE ONE DAY CHUCK NESTOR COMES TO ME AND SAYS

IRV... IRV,
THEY FIRED
ME

WHAT?!

THEY'RE REPLACING
'MAJOR JUSTICE' WITH
A MYSTERY BOOK
'WHODUNNIT?'

TOMMY
JANGKOWSKI'S DOIN'
IT

JANGKOWSKI?!

YOUR SON-OF-A-BITCH ASSISTANT?
HE JUST STARTED! YOU'VE
BEEN AT ZOOM FOR TEN
YEARS!! THEY --

I KNOW
HEY, DON'T WORRY!
THEY'RE NOT THE
ONLY GAME IN THE
SEA! I'M SURE
I'LL BE WORKIN'
AGAIN BY
YESTERDAY!

LUCKILY, "NIGHTSTALKER" WAS ONE OF ZOOM'S
ONLY SUPERHERO BOOKS THAT WAS MAKING
MONEY IN FACT, IT WAS EVEN MADE INTO
A WEEKLY T.V. SHOW!

I WOULD FIGHT
MY ENEMIES FROM HERE
TO SCHENECTADY FOR
ONE PUFF OF A
CHESTERBORO™!

OF COURSE I NEVER
SAW A PENNY OF IT,
BUT I WAS STILL
PROUD, AND ZOOM WAS
STILL PAYING ME
WELL

UNTIL



UM YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?

IRVING, COME ON IN, SIT DOWN.

J.C, IF THIS IS ABOUT THAT VAMPIRE STORY I TOLD CAROL I'D HAVE IT IN BY--

IRVING.

IRVING, I'M AFRAID I HAVE... I HAVE SOME BAD NEWS.

I THOUGHT THE BI-MONTHLY SCHEDULE WOULD HELP YOU OUT, BUT..

WELL.

I'M AFRAID WE'RE TAKING YOU OFF OF THE 'NIGHTSTALKER' AND REPLACING YOU WITH ABE RONKO.

WH..?

WHAT?

I'M SORRY, IRVING, BUT..

"BUT?" BUT I'VE BEEN DOING NIGHTSTALKER FOR TEN YEARS!



BUT I WOULDN'T SIT! THIS KID WASN'T GOING TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO!

"WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WANT TO WORK HERE?" I SAYS TO HIM.



I TELL HIM "YOU'RE NOT KICKING ME OFF 'NIGHTSTALKER' IN FACT, UNLESS YOU RETURN IT TO A MONTHLY SCHEDULE, I'M WALKING!"

HE ASKS ME TO PLEASE BE REASONABLE, HE OFFERS ME A DEAL

IF I'LL DO THE HORROR BOOKS, I'LL GET A 15% RAISE

"NO WAY" I SAY.



"EITHER I STAY ON THE NIGHTSTALKER, OR I'M GONE!"



"A 30% RAISE AND MY OWN OFFICE?" HE OFFERS ME. HE STARTS SAYING HOW IMPORTANT I AM TO ZOOM.



"NO DEAL" I SAY



"IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND," I SAY



"YOU KNOW WHERE YOU CAN FIND ME!"



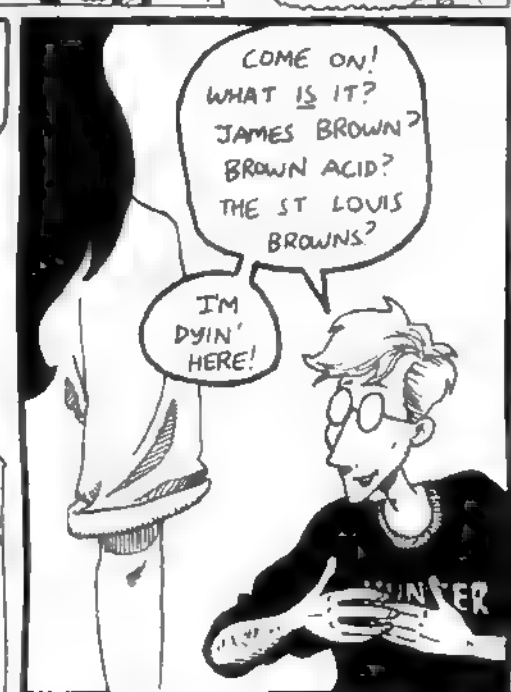
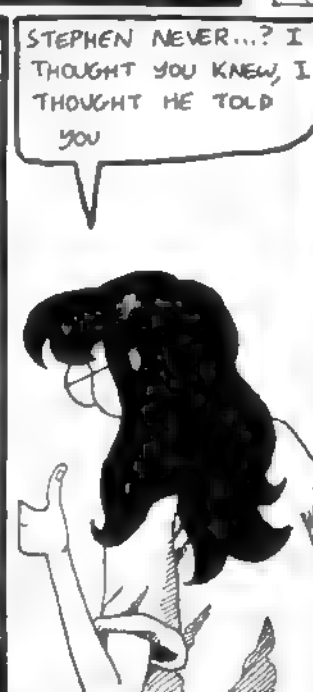
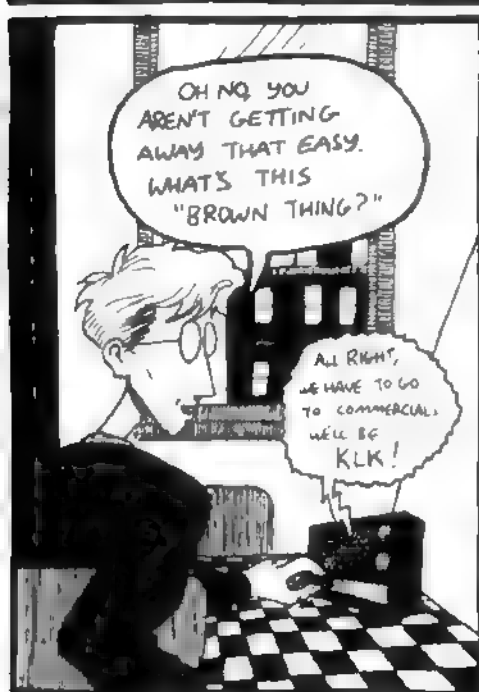
GREAT! WE'LL WRAP THIS UP NEXT TIME!





glorious results of a misspent youth







SO FOR A FEW WEEKS FOLLOWING THE BROADCAST, AN ALL-TOO FAMILIAR SCENE PLAYED ITSELF OUT..."



SO, SINCE THEN, HE'S TRYING TO KEEP THE BROWN THING UNDER RAPS.



YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF ...



I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE STILL HERE

AREN'T YOU GOING TO THE INTERVIEW?



FLAVORS A
BITTER, MEAN
UNL KABLE OLD
MAN

BUT ZOOM REALLY
SCREWED HIM OVER WITH
THIS NIGHTSTALKER
THING HE SHOULD BE A
MILLIONAIRE, KICKING
BACK, RETIRED IN
FLORIDA

INSTEAD, HE
LIVES IN A ROACH INFESTED
APARTMENT IN BROOKLYN,
STILL HAVING TO DRAW
WHEN HE'S NEARLY
EIGHTY,

A SLOW
DEATH AT
THE HANDS
OF BIG
BUSINESS

SO, WHAT'RE YOU GOING
TO DO TODAY INSTEAD?
WORK ON THE BOOK?



YOU MUST BE
ALMOST DONE
WITH CHAPTER
S X, R GHT?



SOMETIMES I'M
ASHAMED OF THIS
INDUSTRY



OH STEPHEN!
NO! NO! NO!

PANT PANTS

I CAN
TASTE
THE
BROWN...
SLOBBER

NIGHT STALKER
INTERVIEWS
PART
II:

WIFE in exile AFTER ABDICATION

SO WHAT
THE HELL ELSE
COULD I DO?





AFTER J.C. -- AFTER
I QUIT ZOOM, I STILL
HAD A WIFE AND KID
TO SUPPORT, RIGHT?



SO FIRST THING I
DO IS START PRYING MY
WARES TO OTHER COMICS
PUBLISHERS. SO UM, THAT'S
HOW I HOOKED UP WITH
EAGLE EYE INC



THEY WERE MUCH
SMALLER, OF COURSE,
AND THE MONEY WASN'T
NEARLY AS GOOD, BUT
I DID GET A CERTAIN
DEGREE OF RESPECT,
SEEING AS HOW I
MADE UP THE NIGHT-
STALKER AND ALL.

OKAY, WHAT I
NEED YOU TO DO IS,
COME UP WITH ANOTHER
CHARACTER LIKE THAT,
OKAY?

WE KNOW
YOU GOT IT IN
YOU, MERV!



I TRIED MY HAND AT A BUNCH OF
DIFFERENT CHARACTERS -- GLADIATOR,
DR. OBOT, THE GLAMOUROUS GHOST--
BUT NONE OF THEM CAUGHT ON
TO BIG.



I GOTTA HUNCH
J.C. PULLED IN SOME
FAVORS WITH THE NEWS-
STAND DISTRIBUTORS TO
MAKE SURE THE BOOKS
WOULD FLOP... BUT I
CAN'T PROVE NOTHING.

AFTER MY TIME WITH EAGLE EYE WAS UP, I WENT TO WORK FOR ANOTHER SMALL PUBLISHER, FUN STUFF TIME, WHO WAS OUT IN DETROIT OR SOMETHING.

I DID A GREAT NEW CHARACTER CALLED ATOMIC GORILLA. HE WAS A ZOO KEEPER WHO'D BEEN HIT BY A RADIOACTIVE ASTEROID AND TURNED INTO A SUPER-SMART APE.

BUT THE PUBLISHER SKIPPED TOWN WITH MY ART BEFORE THE FIRST ISSUE EVEN SAW PRINT. IF I EVER FIND THAT SON OF A BITCH... AHM, THAT WAS FORTY YEARS AGO, HE'S PROBABLY DEAD. WHERE WAS I?

DETROIT...

OH YEAH!

"I SHOULD HAVE SEATBELTS!"

WHEN I GOT BACK TO NEW YORK, MY WIFE HAD MET THIS WOMAN WHOSE HUSBAND RAN THE APEX NOVELTY CO. OUT OF BAYONNE. HE WAS LOOKIN' FOR SOME ARTIST TO DO SOME OF THOSE, Y'KNOW, HUMOROUS BAR NAPKINS.

THE MONEY WASN'T BAD, SO..

THANKS ALOT, Irv! THESE LOOK GREAT! WAIT A SEC, I'LL CUT YOU A CHECK.

AND, HEY, WHILE I'M DOING THAT, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

YOU USED TO DRAW COMICS, RIGHT? YOU SHOULD GET A KICK OUT OF THIS.

BLOPPO'S WILD RIDE!

HE'S TOTALLY LOOKING LIKE A CAR!



BUT WHAT IF
DAGWOOD FINDS --
OH MY STARS!

GOOD, MRS
BUMSTEAD!

SLURP!

WHAT.?

HOLY SHIT! THIS IS
WHAT THE HELL
KIND OF COMK IS
THIS?

HABA!
MY FRIEND, THAT'S
WHAT'S KNOWN AS A
"TISJUANNA BIBLE," A
REAL RIB TICKLER,
HUH?

NOW, LEMME
SEE HERE..

THEY'RE NOT
ALLOWED TO MAKE
COMICS LIKE THIS,
ARE THEY?

HABA NO,
THEY AREN'T

BUT WE
DO IT
ANYWAY

AND SAY, IRV,
IF YOU'RE EVER
LOOKING FOR SOME
MORE WORK..

HUH?

WHAT, YOU MEAN
THIS KINDA SHIT?/ I.
COULDN'T... WHAT THE HELL
WOULD I TELL MY WIFE?!

HOLY
SHIT

TECH/E

YOUR WIFE!
TELL HER YOU'RE
MAKING MORE BAR
NAPKINS! WHO
CARES?

LOOK, IF
YOU DON'T WANT
TO DO, IT'S OKAY
WITH ME. STELLA
JUST TOLD ME
YOU NEEDED THE
WORK IS ALL.

UH

HOW MUCH
DOES IT
PAY?

SO... THAT'S WHAT I DID FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS OR SO: DREW ILLEGAL PORNO COMICS, STARRING A LOT OF FAMOUS CARTOON CHARACTERS AND (IF I COULD GET THE LIKENESS) THE OCCASIONAL MOVIE STAR.



IT WAS AN EXPERIENCE, I'LL SAY THAT MUCH. FIRST IT WAS DISGUSTING, DRAWING THAT KIND OF STUFF. BUT AFTER A WHILE, I DON'T KNOW, IT BECAME KIND OF FUN, KIND OF LIKE SOLVING A MATH PROBLEM. BUT THEN IT GOT BORING. I MEAN THERE'S ONLY SO MANY POSES, Y'KNOW?

I'M NOT ASHAMED OF DOING IT. I NEEDED TO MAKE SOME MONEY, RIGHT? SO WHY THE HELL NOT? NOW, I KNOW THAT WE WERE, WHAT YA CALL IT, INFRINGING ON SOME COPYRIGHTS. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? FUCK 'EM!

IF IT WASN'T FOR ZOOM GIVING ME THE AXE I WOULDN'T BE HAVING TO DO THIS SHIT TO --

JUSTICE COMES BY NIGHT!

UH, WAIT A SECOND, DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU QUIT ZOOM COMICS, MR. FLAVOR?







WHAT'RE YOU DOING, ED?

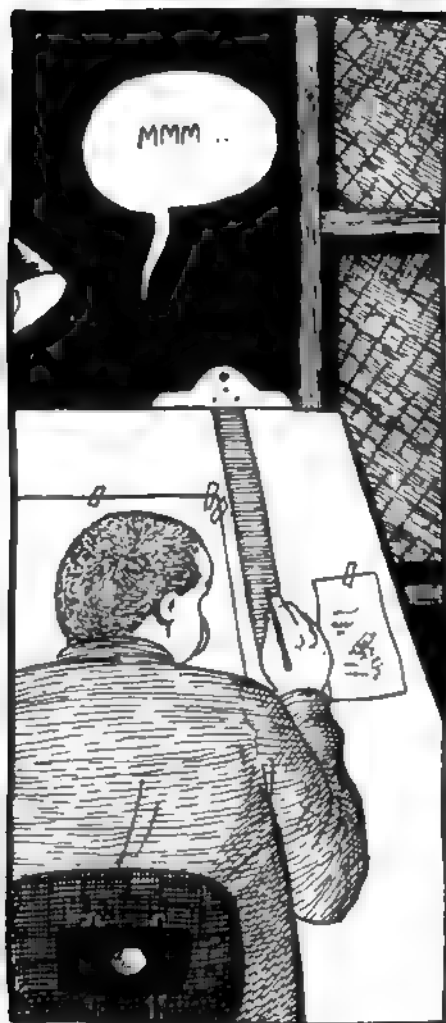
HMM? OH, I'M WORKING ON THIS FLYER FOR A VIDEO STORE OPENING.

WITH MR. FLAVOR DOING THE INTERVIEW, SOMEONE HAS TO PICK UP THE SLACK ON THE DRAWING END.



IT MUST BE REALLY TOUGH WORKING ALL THE TIME FOR HIM.

DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT HE CAN BE REALLY OBNOXIOUS,

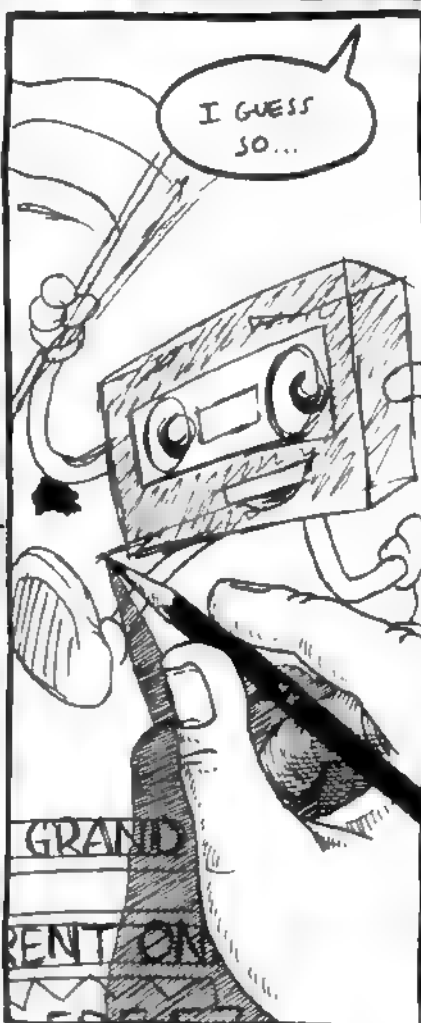


MMM ...

OKAY, SO BIG DEAL, RIGHT? YOU CREATED THIS SUPER-HERO AND GOT RIPPED OFF!



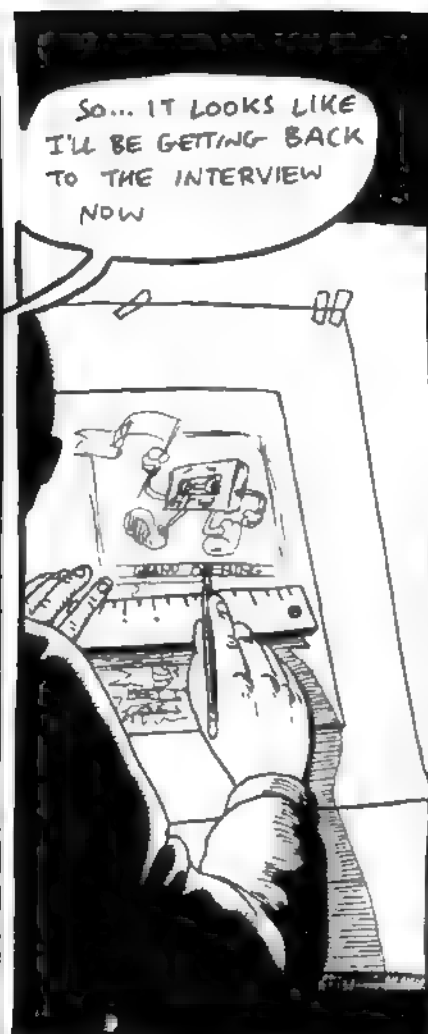
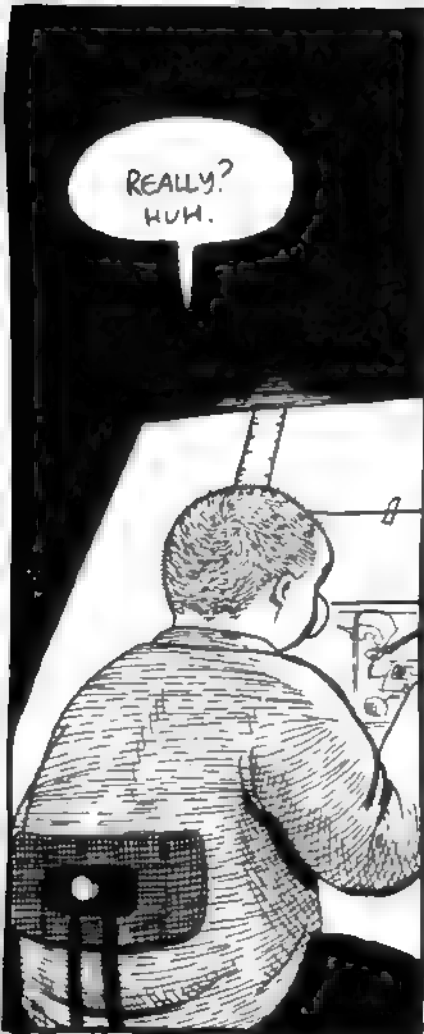
DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAVE TO TAKE IT OUT ON EVERYONE ELSE?



I GUESS SO...

GRAND
RENT ON







AT GIMBEL'S IN THE MEN'S DEPARTMENT SELLING MEN'S SLACKS, BUT I GOTTA TELL YOU, IT JUST WASN'T WORKING OUT, ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT THE MONEY WAS SHIT, I ... I MISSED DRAWING

THE LAST ART JOB I HAD WAS TWO YEARS AGO, DRAWING THOSE GOD DAMNED PORN COMICS.

I WAS OUT OF OPTIONS. SO I DECIDED TO TAKE A CRAPSHOOT AND BITE THE BULLET ..

UH. HELLO. I'M HERE TO APPLY FOR THE ARTIST'S POSITIONS I SAW IN THE PAPER.

MY NAME IS FLAVOR.. IRVING FLAVOR.

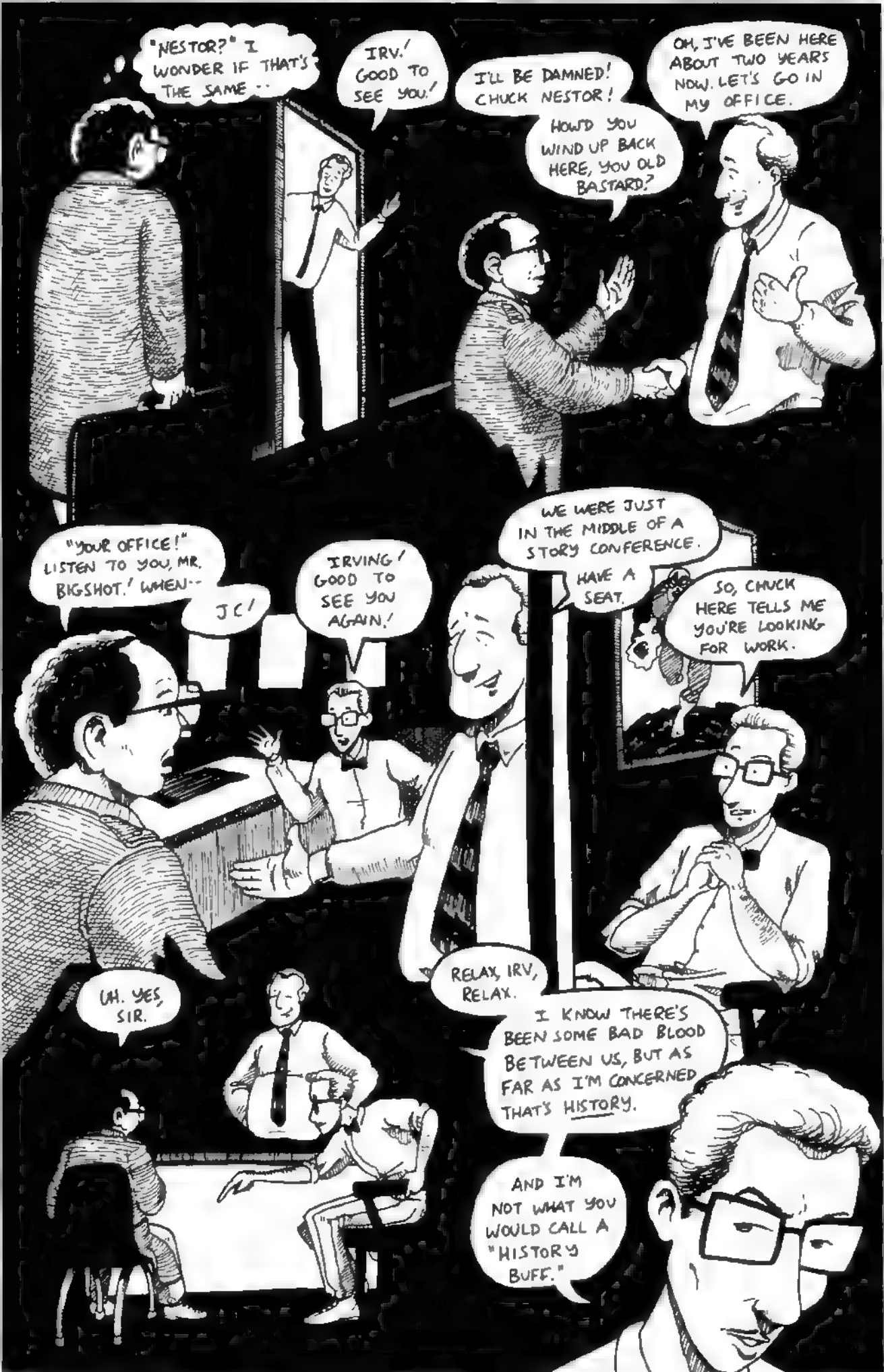
CERTAINLY, SIR JUST LEAVE YOUR PORTFOLIO WITH US OVERNIGHT AND WE'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW, MMMHM?

OH . UH. SURE SURE

THIS IS SOMETHING SENATOR KENNEDY AND ALL AMERICANS MUST KNOW WE TRIED IT WITH HITLER AND.

OH, YES, THIRD ROOM ON THE LEFT, MR. NESTOR IS WAITING

HELLO, MY NAME IS FLAVOR, I DROPPED OFF MY PORTFOLIO YESTERDAY?



"NESTOR?" I
WONDER IF THAT'S
THE SAME --

IRV.
GOOD TO
SEE YOU!

I'LL BE DAMNED!
CHUCK NESTOR!

OH, I'VE BEEN HERE
ABOUT TWO YEARS
NOW. LET'S GO IN
MY OFFICE.

HOWD YOU
WIND UP BACK
HERE, YOU OLD
BASTARD?

"YOUR OFFICE!"
LISTEN TO YOU, MR.
BIGSHOT! WHEN--

JC!

IRVING!
GOOD TO
SEE YOU
AGAIN!

WE WERE JUST
IN THE MIDDLE OF A
STORY CONFERENCE.

HAVE A
SEAT.

SO, CHUCK
HERE TELLS ME
YOU'RE LOOKING
FOR WORK.

UH. YES,
SIR.

RELAX, IRV,
RELAX.

I KNOW THERE'S
BEEN SOME BAD BLOOD
BETWEEN US, BUT AS
FAR AS I'M CONCERNED
THAT'S HISTORY.

AND I'M
NOT WHAT YOU
WOULD CALL A
"HISTORY'S
BUFF."



CHUCK'S SHOWN
ME YOUR PORTFOLIO, AND
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU STILL
"GOT IT." SO AS LONG AS
YOU'LL BEHAVE YOURSELF
YOU'VE GOT A JOB,
OKAY?

UH,
OKAY,
SURE

OH! UH!
BUT J.C., WE DON'T
NEED ANY PENCILLERS
RIGHT NOW. MAYBE, IRV,
WE COULD CALL YOU ONCE
AN OPENING -- UH

UH, ONCE WE
HAVE AN OPENING
J.C.?

HMMM.

I THINK I HAVE
AN IDEA. IRV, WHAT
DO YOU THINK ABOUT
STARTING OUT IN
MECHANICAL?

MECHANICAL?
YOU MEAN,..
DOWNSTAIRS
MECHANICAL?

YES, YOU KNOW:
PASTE UP, CORRECTIONS,
WHAT HAVE YOU. WE
REALLY DO NEED
SOMEONE QUICK

IT WOULD
BE STRICTLY
TEMPORARY,
OF COURSE

WHAT
ELSE
COULD
I DO?

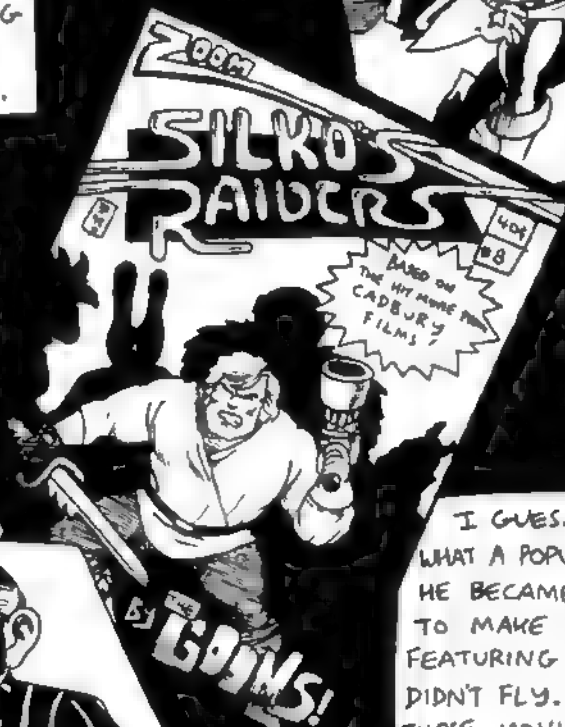
I TOOK
IT

SO I WORKED FOR ZOOM
FOR, WHAT TWENTY FIVE?
THIRTY YEARS AFTER THAT?

I ONLY HAD TO WORK IN
MECHANICAL FOR THE FIRST
YEAR OR SO. THEN I
FINALLY GOT TO RETURN
TO PENCILING.

I WORKED ON A LOT OF
BOOKS DURING THAT STRETCH.
"CAPTAIN COMPOUND," "ZACK
PISTOL: FOR HIRE," "SCREAMING
EAGLE." I EVEN BROUGHT
BACK THE ATOMIC GORILLA.

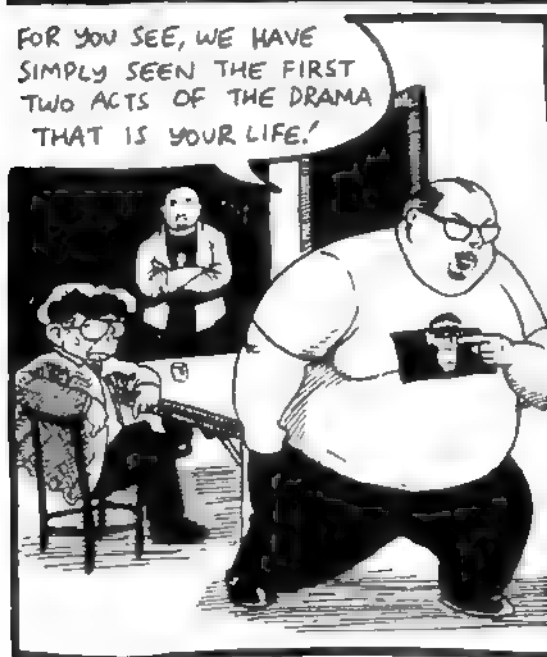
I NEVER DID
GET TO WORK
ON NIGHTSTALKER
AGAIN, THOUGH.



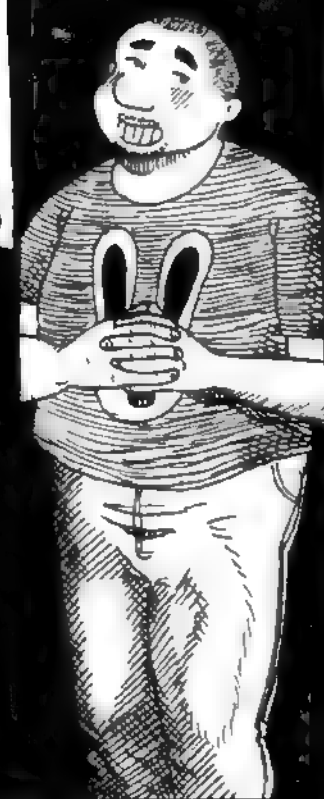
I GUESS YOU KNOW
WHAT A POPULAR CHARACTER
HE BECAME. THEY TRIED
TO MAKE A T.V. SHOW
FEATURING HIM, BUT IT
DIDN'T FLY. ONCE THEY MADE
THOSE MOVIES, THOUGH, HE
BECAME MORE POPULAR
THAN EVER

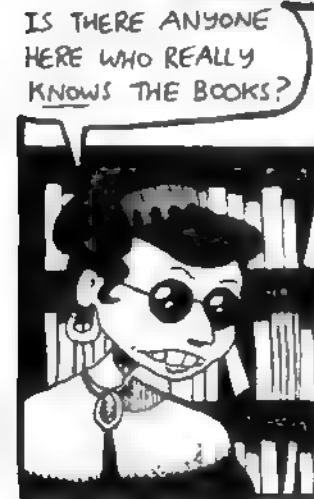
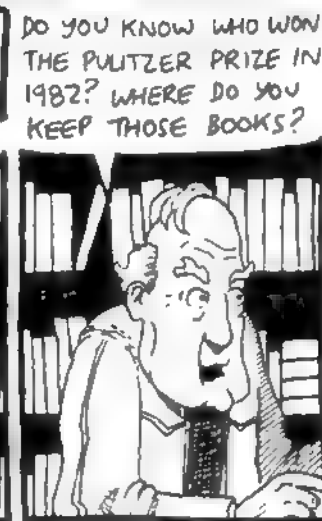
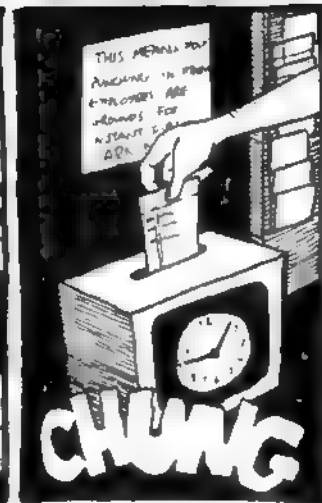
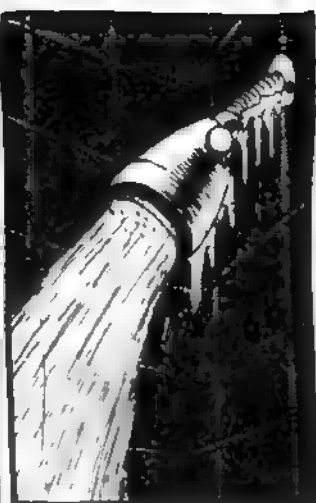
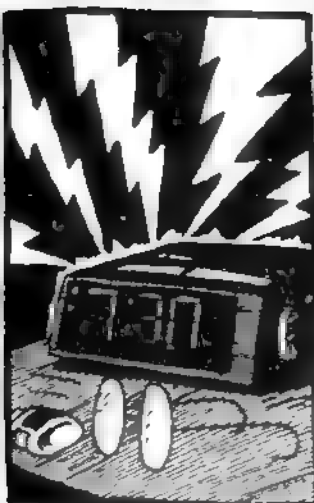
I DID MY LAST STORY
FOR ZOOM COMICS EIGHT
YEARS AGO.





IF YOU
COULD
CHANGE
ONE
ASPECT OF
YOUR
APPEARANCE
WHAT
WOULD
IT
BE?





SHERMAN, THIS MORNING
A CUSTOMER COMPLAINED
ABOUT YOUR ATTITUDE.



NOW, NORMALLY WED LET
IT SLIDE, BUT LATELY
YOUR PERFORMANCE HAS
BEEN... NOT WHAT IT
COULD BE.



I SEE THAT YOU'VE
BEEN LATE FOUR TIMES
AND ALREADY MISSED
TWO DAYS THIS MONTH.



IM NOT GOING TO GIVE
YOU A FORMAL WARNING,
BUT OFF THE RECORD...



HEY, YOU WORK HERE
CHIEF? CAN YOU
HELP ME?



KA-CHUNG

BOILING FROG - No.2

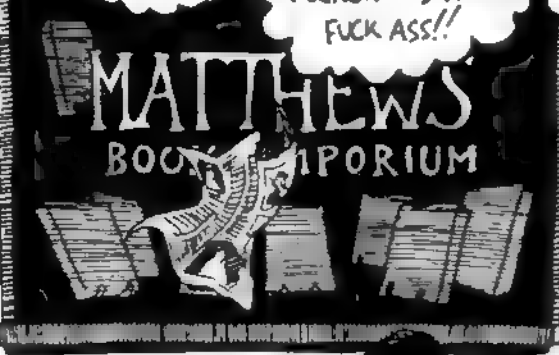
Art of FRICTION

FUCKER

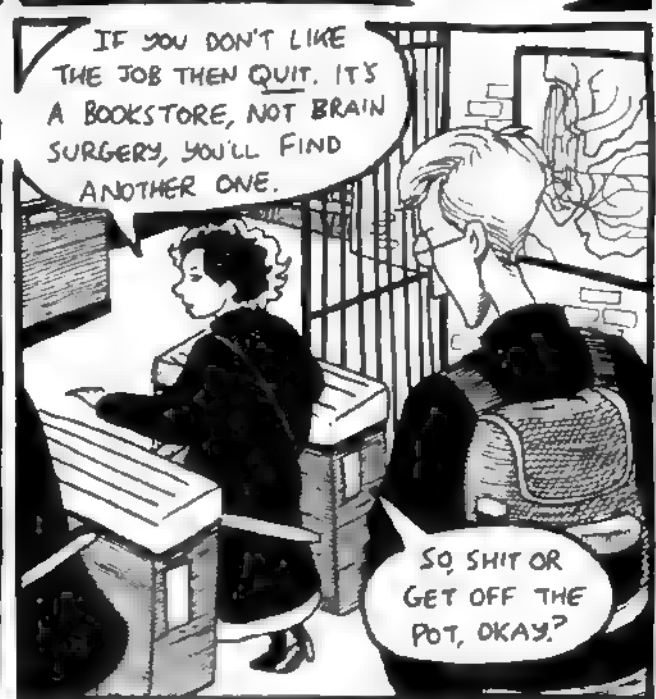
FUCKIN' PEECE
OF SHIT ASS MOTHER
FUCKER GOD DAMN
FUCK ASS!!

PERFECT ENDING
TO A PERFECT FUCKING
DAY. WHERE THE
HELL IS SHE?!

FUCK







OH, YOU REALLY HAVE
THE ANSWERS TO EVERYONE
ELSE'S PROBLEMS DON'T YOU?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LOOK
AT YOUR OWN STUPID
LIFE FOR A CHANGE.

HEY, I MAY HAVE
PROBLEMS BUT AT LEAST
I'M NOT FUCKING BELLY
ACHING ABOUT THEM
ALL THE TIME.

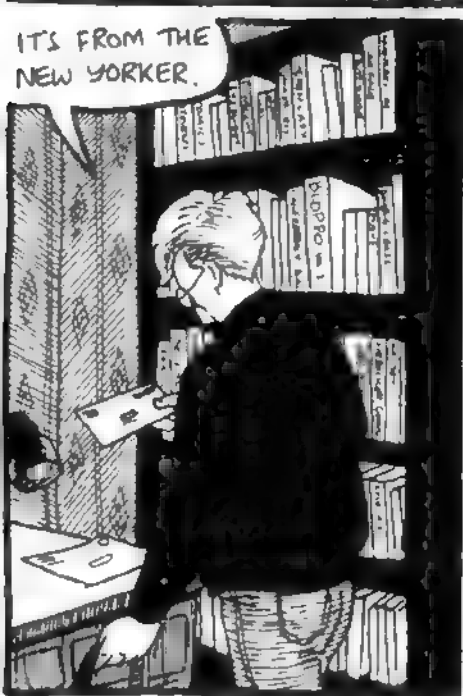
THAT'S TRUE. INSTEAD
YOU SPREAD THEM AROUND
SO THEY BECOME EVERY-
ONE'S PROBLEMS.

WHA--?!
LIKE WHAT?
I DON'T--

"LIKE WHAT?"
LIKE MONEY FOR INSTANCE
YOU STILL HAVEN'T PAID
ME BACK THAT \$100
YOU BORROWED FOR YOUR
RENT LAST MONTH.

YEAH, AND YOU
ONLY REMIND ME OF
THAT TWICE A
DAY.

YEAH, PLUS EVERY
TIME I SEE YOU BLOW
\$200 ON SHOES YOU'LL
NEVER FUCKING WEAR
OR ANOTHER CASE
OF GIN.



OH.. DON'T WORRY
ABOUT IT TOO MUCH,
SWEETIE.

I HEARD
THAT WILLIAM
FAULKNER WALL-
PAPERED HIS BED
ROOM WITH ALL
HIS REJECTION
SLIPS

BESIDES, THE
NEW YORKER ISN'T
EASY TO CRACK.

YEAH YEAH,
I KNOW

I GUESS I
WAS SECRETLY
HOPING THAT
.. I DON'T
KNOW

F SCOTT
FITZGERALD WAS
MY AGE WHEN HE
WROTE "THIS SIDE
OF PARADISE"



SWEETIE, JUST
GIVE YOURSELF
SOME TIME

I BELIEVE
IN YOU.



OH YEAH.

MY DADS COMING IN
TO TOWN NEXT WEEK FOR
THANKSGIVING AND HE
WANTS TO HAVE
DINNER WITH US.
OKAY?

G'NIGHT



ED'S BANTIA

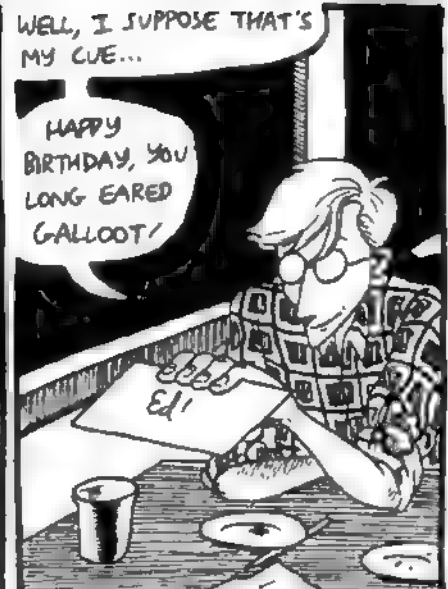






SEE, THAT'S JUST IT: WE'VE HARDLY HAD ANY JOBS THE PAST FEW WEEKS AND HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO PAY ME.

THANK GOD MY AUNT DAISY GAVE ME SOME BIRTHDAY MONEY!



WELL, I SUPPOSE THAT'S MY CUE...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, YOU LONG EARED GALLOOT!



A FIFTY DOLLAR GIFT CERTIFICATE TO "UNCLE AL'S COMIC GALAXY OF FUN AND COLLECTABLES!"

OH BOY!



WELL DID ALL COME FROM? ANSWER TO THAT!

WHAT TH...?

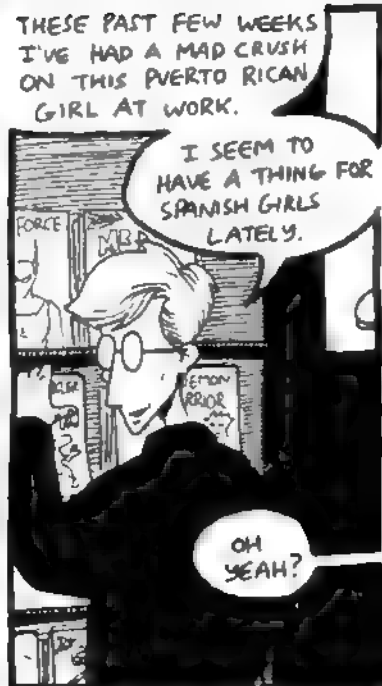


YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO GET?

ALMOST. WHICH ONE SHOULD I GET?

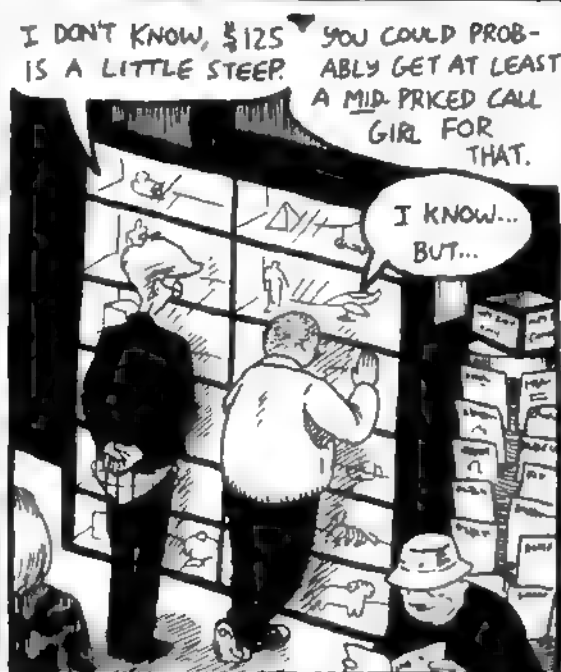
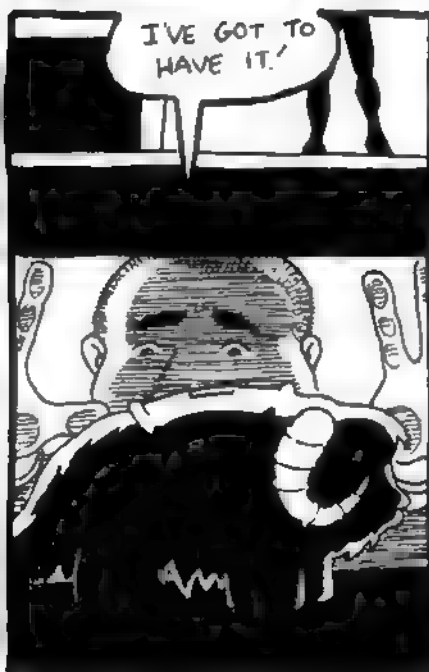
"THE COMPLEAT BLOPP VOL. II"

OR "EAVESDROP: A CARTOON JOURNAL OF A PATHETIC BASTARD?"



"I HAD ONE OF THOSE WEIRD MOMENTS WHERE I WAS TALKING TO HER AND I FELT LIKE 'IF I WAS STILL SINGLE, I THINK THIS GIRL MIGHT HAVE GONE OUT WITH ME, I COULD'VE KISSED HER.'"







NOV. '94

COMICS WORLD

Number 196

\$5.95 US. \$8.95 Can.

THIS ISSUE: SALES
CONTINUE TO RISE
INDUSTRY-WIDE!

PLUS THE
WORST
COMICS OF
THE
YEAR!

ZOOM
COMICS
VS.

IRVING
FLAVOR

PIONEER CREATOR
CHALLENGES THE
"PALACE OF DREAMS"
FOR OWNERSHIP OF
THE NIGHTSTALKER



WHAT IS YOUR SECRET TALENT?



I USED TO PLAY TRUMPET.

BACK IN THE FORTIES, I MEAN.



I CAN DO A MEAN MARLON BRANDO:

"EVERYTIME I TRY TO GET OUT, THEY PULL ME RIGHT BACK IN."



WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I COULD OPEN A BEER BOTTLE WITH MY TEETH

NO, I WOULDN'T TRY IT NOW!



UH... I CAN JUGGLE.



I USED TO TAKE PIANO LESSONS. I COULD PROBABLY PLAY "DON'T LET IT END"

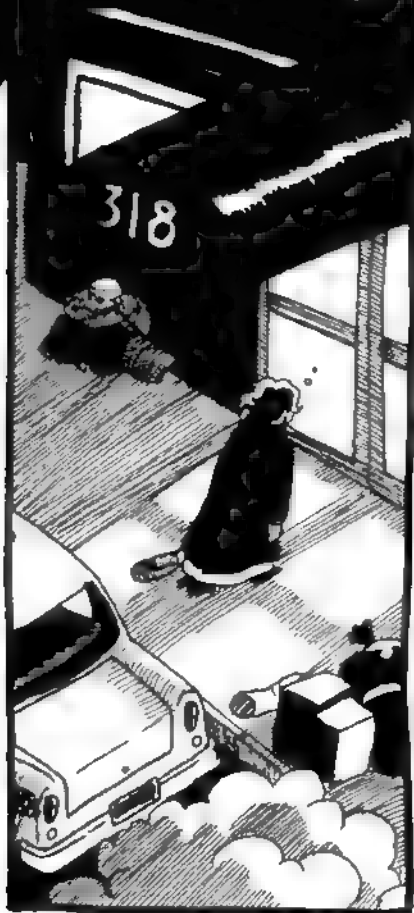


I KNOW EVERY INKER WHO EVER WORKED ON "BATMAN."

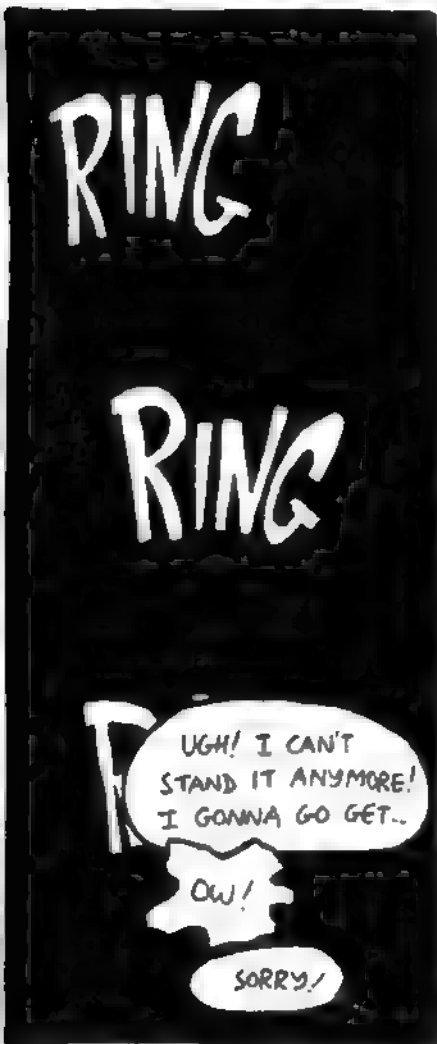
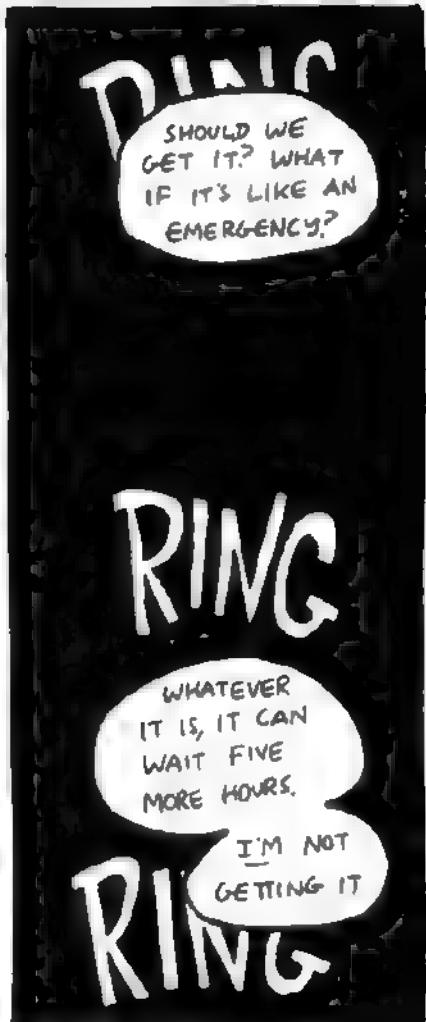




gromit











I WAS AT WORK, BUT LISTEN: I THINK GROMIT'S REALLY SICK!

WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT'S THE MATTER?



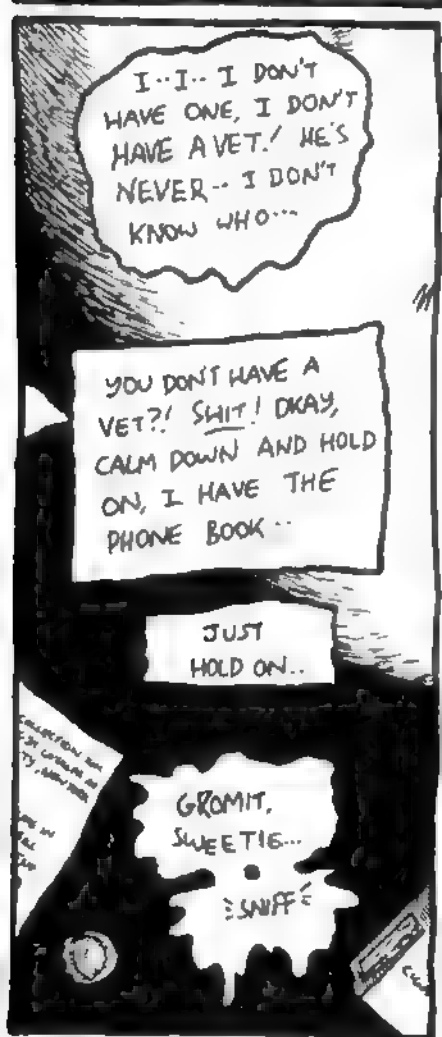
OHMYGOD! WHEN DID --



IT...IT LOOKS LIKE HE PUKE^d UP EVERYWHERE TOO

SHERMAN, WHAT DO I DO?!

JESUS! OKAY, HANG UP AND CALL YOUR VET, THEN CALL ME BACK AND--



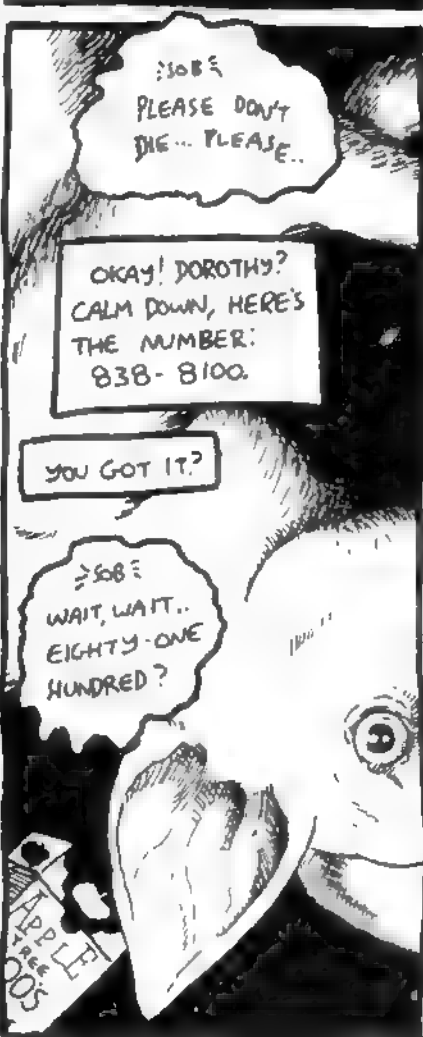
I..I.. I DON'T HAVE ONE, I DON'T HAVE A VET! HE'S NEVER-- I DON'T KNOW WHO...

YOU DON'T HAVE A VET?! SHIT! OKAY, CALM DOWN AND HOLD ON, I HAVE THE PHONE BOOK...

JUST HOLD ON...

GROMIT, SWEETIE...

SNIFF



SOB PLEASE DON'T DIE... PLEASE...

OKAY! DOROTHY? CALM DOWN, HERE'S THE NUMBER: 838-8100.

YOU GOT IT?

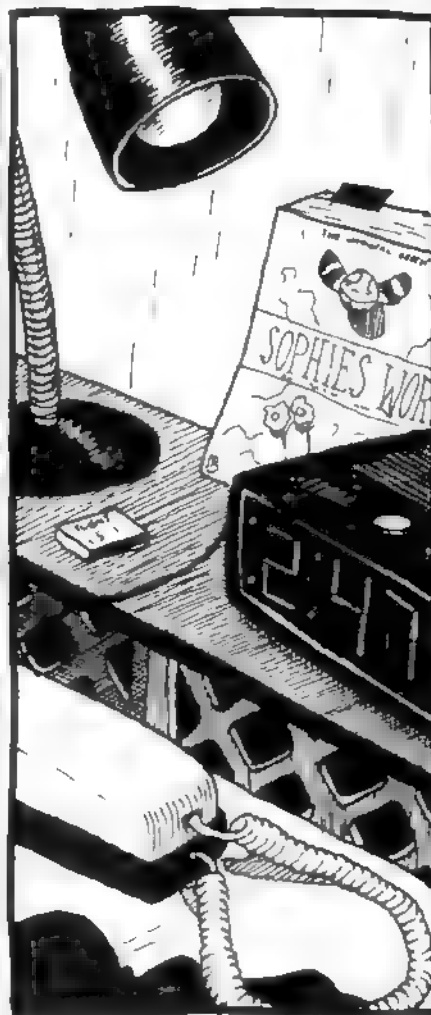
SOB WAIT, WAIT.. EIGHTY-ONE HUNDRED?



YES, NOW HURRY UP AND CALL THEM! WHEN YOU FIND OUT WHAT TO DO IF YOU CAN, CALL ME BACK, OKAY?

OKAY, DOROTHY?

SNIFF OKAY.







OH, SHERMAN,
I'M SO GLAD
YOU'RE HERE..

SORRY IT TOOK
ME SO LONG, YOU
KNOW THE F-TRAIN.

DID YOU
TALK TO THE
DOCTOR?



THEY JUST TOOK
HIM IN. THEY
DON'T KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED YET OR
WHAT'S WRONG

I'M SO
SCARED



DON'T WORRY, HE'LL BE FINE.
HOWS ABOUT WE WAIT INSIDE?
THAT WAY IF THE DOCTOR
NEEDS YOU, HE CAN FIND
YOU. OKAY?

OKAY.



MR
O'BRIEN?

YEAH?
HOW IS
SHE?



WE HAVE GOOD
NEWS, MR. O'BRIEN
WE X-RAYED DIGGLES
AND IT LOOKS LIKE
THE TOY WILL
PROBABLY PASS
WITHOUT ANY
PROBLEM



OH, THANK
GOD! MY WIFE
WAS WORRIED
SICK!

MISS
LESTRADE?



IN ANY CASE, I'M GOING TO BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU: AT THIS POINT YOUR DOG GROMIT IS IN A COMA.

WE'RE DOING WHAT WE CAN, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ISN'T MUCH WE--



I WANT YOU TO DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN DO. I DON'T CARE HOW MUCH IT COSTS, OR, OR,

JUST PLEASE MAKE SURE HE'LL BE OKAY.



UH...

WE WILL, MISS LESTRADE BUT I HAVE TO BE HONEST WITH YOU:

IT IS UNLIKELY GROMIT WILL COME OUT OF THIS COMA.



USUALLY WHEN AN ANIMAL THIS STAT... UH, DEAT

OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD

WH...



CAN :SNIFF:

CAN I SEE HIM?

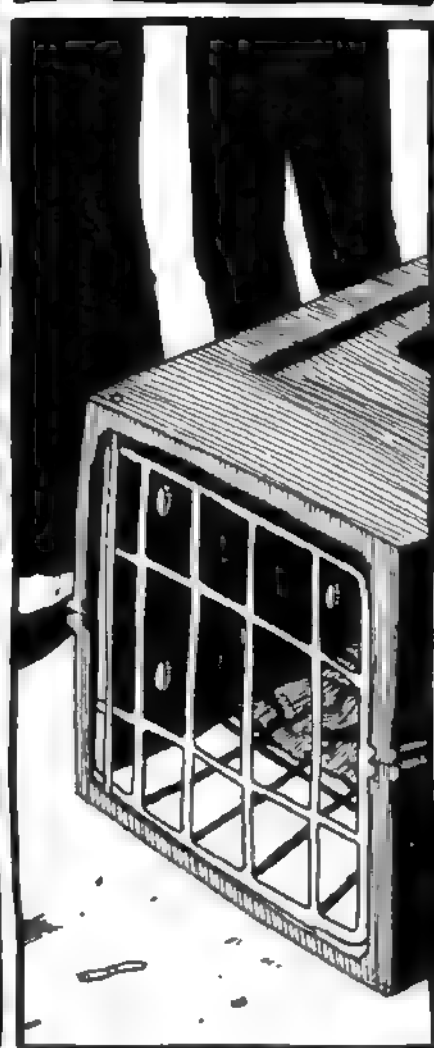


CERTAINLY.

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK, SWEETIE.







"ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO CALL OUT AND KEEP YOU COMPANY?"

"NAH. I'M JUST GOING TO GO HOME AND GO TO SLEEP."



"OKAY, I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I GET HOME FROM WORK."

"SEE YOU LATER"



"BYE."



"OKAY, I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I GET HOME FROM WORK."

"SEE YOU LATER."

SHERMAN,
I HAVE TO SPEAK
TO YOU, PLEASE

"BYE"

SHERMAN, I COULDN'T
HELP BUT NOTICE YOU
WERE TWO HOURS LATE.

YEAH, I'M SORRY.
I CALLED MARIA AND
TOLD HER TO TELL--

I DON'T CARE IF YOU
SENT A TELEGRAM FROM
KATMANDU. YOU WERE
STILL LATE.

I HAVE WARNED
YOU REPEATEDLY ABOUT
YOUR RECENT ABSENCES,
YOUR LATENESSES, BUT
YOU DON'T SEEM TO.

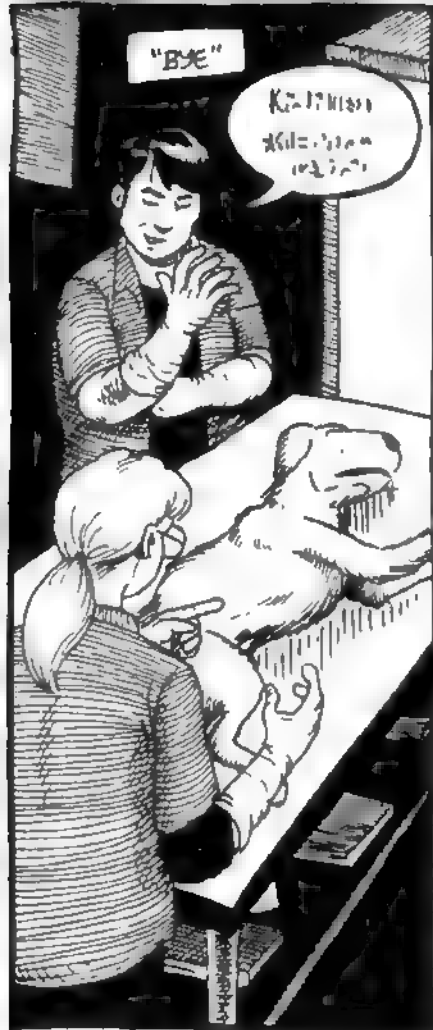
OKAY, I DON'T LIKE TO
HAVE TO DO THIS, BUT I'M
GIVING YOU A FORMAL,
WRITTEN WARNING.

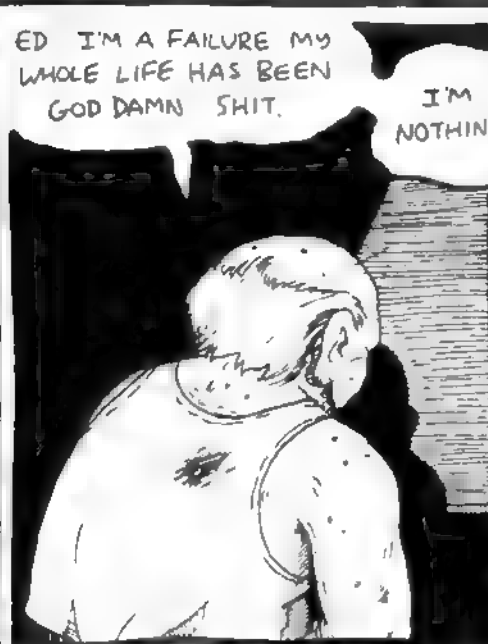
YOU ARE NOW
ON PROBATION.

IF YOU ARE MORE
THAN FIFTEEN MINUTES
LATE OR MISS ONE DAY
WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S NOTE,
WE'LL BE FORCED TO
DISMISS YOU

IS THIS
ALL CLEAR,
SHERMAN?

YEAH.





AFT..

AFTER MY WIFE
LEFT ME... SHE GOT
REMARIED TO THIS ITALIAN.
GARGIOLA, GARGIOLA HIS
NAME WAS.

YOU WANNA KNOW
HOW I REMEMBER THIS
ASSHOLE'S NAME SO WELL,
EVEN THOUGH THIS SHIT
HAPPENED SO LONG
AGO?

EVEN THOUGH
MY WIFE, GOD BLESS
HER SOUL, IS BURIED
IN THE COLD, HARD
GROUND?



MY DAUGHTER'S
NAME IS FLORENCE
JEAN GARGIOLA.

WHAT HAPPENED
WAS, AFTER SHE GOT
REMARIED, MY WIFE HAD
FLOEY'S NAME CHANGED.
FROM MY NAME TO
HIS.

SEE, SHE DIDN'T
WANT NOTHING TO DO
WITH ME, DIDN'T EVEN
WANT MY GOD DAMN
NAME TO REMIND
HER...



I HAVEN'T
SEEN FLOEY SINCE
SHE WAS SIXTEEN

FIRST IT WAS CUZ SHE
HATED ME. HER MOTHER DID
THAT. THEN IT... THEN I
DIDN'T WANT HER TO
SEE ME.

UH. MR. FLAVOR
WHY ARE YOU
TELL--

DON'T YOU
GET IT YET,
EDDIE?!

I'M A FUCKIN'
FAILURE!

MR.
FLAVOR.
DON'T --

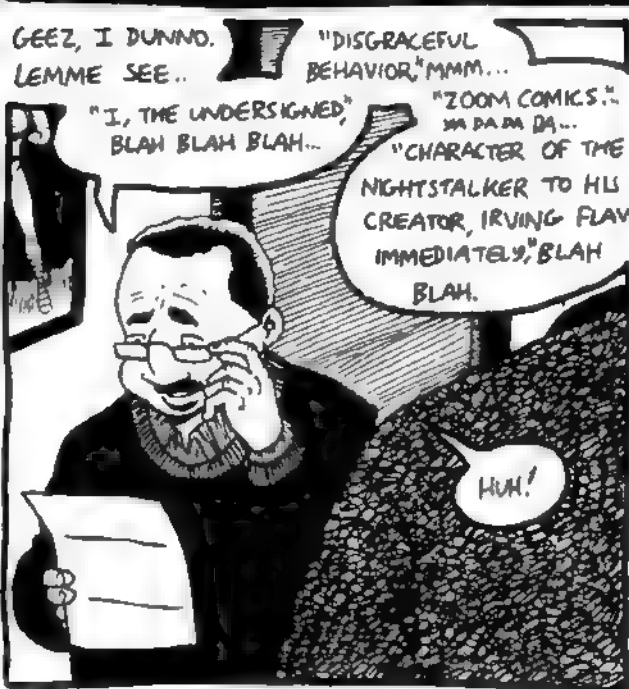
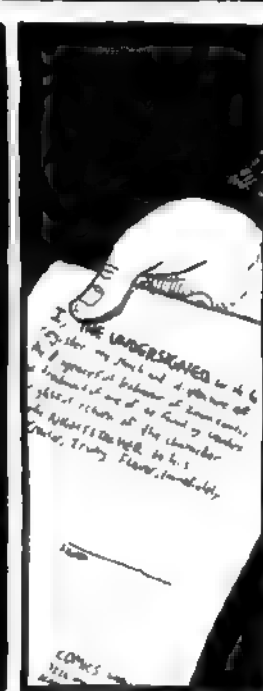
I READ THIS
FUCKING INTERVIEW
AND THERE IT IS IN
GOD DAMN BLACK
AND WHITE!

WHAT A SCHMUCK
I AM! I HAD ONE GOOD
IDEA IN MY WHOLE LIFE
AND I LET THEM
TAKE IT!

SWACK

FLAVOR
SPEAKS!

I FUCKIN'
BLEW IT



PAULIE FOUND THIS ON YOUR DESK, AND I WAS JUST CURIOUS AS TO WHAT THE HELL IT WAS DOING THERE.

I... I PICKED IT UP AT UNCLE AL'S COMIC GALAXY. I DIDN'T-- I WASN'T GOING TO SIGN IT, I WAS JUST--

YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO SIGN IT. YOU KNOW WHY?

THE NIGHTSTALKER IS WHOLLY AND LEGALLY OURS.

IF THAT CRAZY OLD BASTARD THINKS HE CAN BLACKMAIL US INTO GIVING HIM OUR GOLDEN GOOSE, HE'S GOT ANOTHER THOUGHT TO THINK!

AND IF ANYONE AT THIS COMPANY THINKS THIS CRANK DESERVES PENNY ONE FROM US, THEN MAYBE THAT PERSON WOULD FEEL BETTER WORKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

WE SURE DO, J.C.!

LISTEN, I'M REAL SORRY IT HAD TO--

FORGET IT.

JUST LEAVE ME THOSE ACTION FIGURE DESIGNS AND I'LL GET BACK TO YOU.

GOTCHA!

SO... WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER?



THAT SHOULD KEEP THEM QUIET. FOR A WHILE, ANYWAY.



WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THIS FLAVOR THING?

SO.



I HAVEN'T HEARD MUCH ELSE ABOUT IT. THE EXPECTED GRUMBLINGS FROM THE USUAL TROUBLEMAKERS. NOTHING IMPORTANT.

J.C., "COMICS WORLD" HAS GIVEN SO MANY UNFAIR BAD REVIEWS AND TRASHED SO MANY PEOPLE THAT THEY HAVE NO CREDIBILITY.



I TALKED TO TOM SALMON AND HE SAYS "COLLECTOR'S WORLD" WILL BACK US UP 100%. I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.



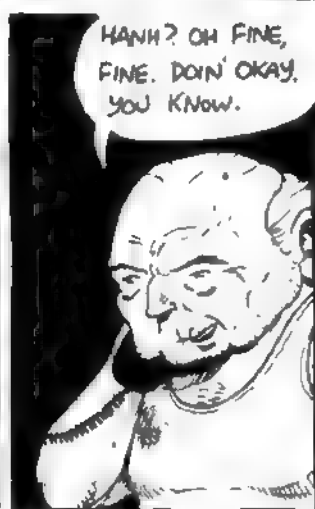
STILL... WITH THE BIG CARDLCO MERGER ON DECK, I DON'T WANT THIS GETTING ANY STICKIER.



UH, WHO'RE YOU CALLING?







Her House



THAT WAS A LOT
OF FUN, BALLOO,
BUT I GOTTA GET
BACK TO THE
DRAWING BOARD.

AWW!

MAYBE
LATER WE
CAN HAVE
A RE--

BANG! BANG!
BANG! BANG!

SHIT.
HERE
WE
GO.

WHO
IS
IT?

YOU MAKE A TOO
MUCH NOISE! QUIET!
QUIET! MY
HOUSE, ANH?

WE'RE SORRY, MRS. TWEED.
OUR KITTY KNOCKED --

ALDA TINE
DE NOISE! WHY?
WHY?! I CALL--

CLICK
CLACK!

WE'RE SORRY
WE'LL TRY TO
BE MORE QUIET.

ANH? WHAT
IS--?

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

SO I TOLD
HIM I WOULDN'T
DO IT, DUE GET
IT YOURSELF!

NO WAY!

I SWEAR
TO GOD, HE GOT
REAL PISSED
AND SHIT,
SAYING HE --

HEY!

FUCK.





\$3.95 IS YOUR CHANGE THANK
YOU FOR SHOPPING AT BIG-GO MART
ENJOY YOUR DAY NEXT.



NO, I ADMIT
IT.

I NEVER WOULD'VE
BELIEVED THAT THEY
WOULD STILL BE GOING
OUT AFTER FIVE
MONTHS, NO.



SHERMAN TOLD
YOU ABOUT THE
DOG, RIGHT?

YEAH.

THE POOR THING'S
PROBABLY BETTER OFF DEAD
IF SHE'S AS BAD NOW AS
SHE WAS WHEN SHE
LIVED WITH US.



DIDN'T GANDHI SAY
SOMETHING LIKE YOU
JUDGE A PERSON BY
HOW THEY TREAT
THEIR ANIMALS?

SOMETHING LIKE
THAT, THEN AGAIN,
EVEN HITLER
LOVED HIS
PUPPIES.



AFTERNOON,
DYLAN.

HEY, YOU
GUYS HEAR THE
BIG THING WITH
TWEED LAST
NIGHT?

WE HEARD YOU
CALL HER A WORD THAT
RHYMES WITH "WATCH,"
THAT'S FOR SURE!
HAHA!

NO! I MEAN THE PART
WHERE LIKE THE
AMBULANCE CAME!

Y'KNOW, AFTER
SHE HAD HER
FUCKIN' HEART
ATTACK?!



JEESUM CROW!

YOU MEAN ... SHE'S DEAD?

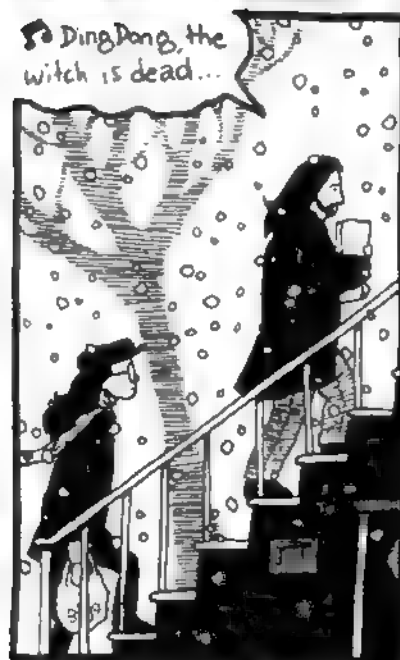


YEAH, RIGHT! I WISH!

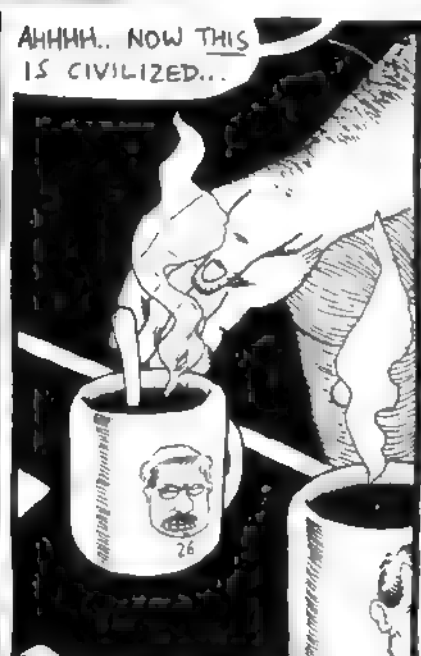
SHE'S JUST GONNA LIKE BE IN THE HOSPITAL FOR LIKE SIX WEEKS OR SOMETHING.

SHIT! MY RIDE! I GOTTA GO. BYE!

SEE YA.



Ding Dong, the witch is dead...

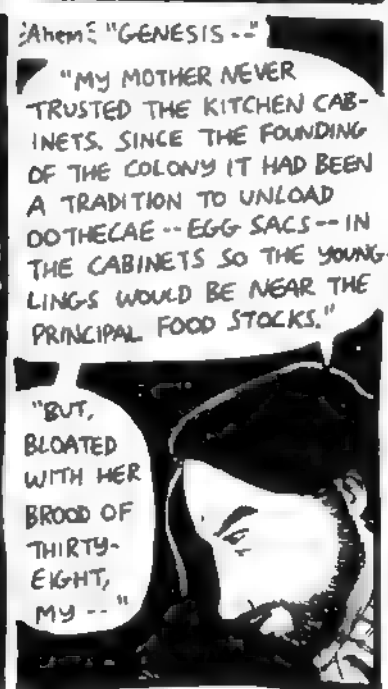


AHHHH.. NOW THIS IS CIVILIZED...



A SNOWY, WINTER NIGHT, CURLED UP WITH A GOOD BOOK, COCOA WITH MARSH-MALLOWs AND MY FAVORITE LOVER.

NOW ALL THAT WE NEED IS A CRACKLING FIRE PLACE. I BELIEVE YOU BEGIN THIS CHAPTER, SWEETIE PIE?



Ahem: "GENESIS --"

"MY MOTHER NEVER TRUSTED THE KITCHEN CABINETS. SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE COLONY IT HAD BEEN A TRADITION TO UNLOAD OOTHECAE -- EGG SACS -- IN THE CABINETS SO THE YOUNGLINGS WOULD BE NEAR THE PRINCIPAL FOOD STOCKS."

"BUT, BLOATED WITH HER BROOD OF THIRTY-EIGHT, MY --"



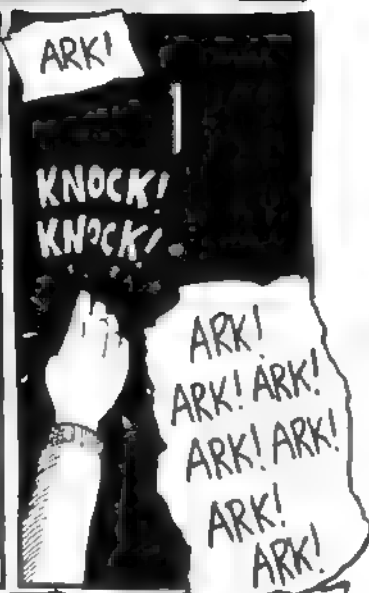
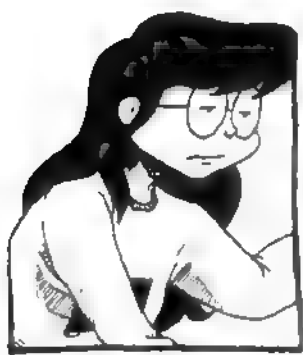




RARK! RARARK!

RRRRARK! RARK!

RARK!



UH, HEH, I DON'T KNOW...
IT SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S
SORT OF BARKING TO,
UH, SORT OF BARKING
TO ME.

HEH.

SURE, OF COURSE
SHE'S BARKING NOW.

SHE DOESN'T
TAKE TO
STRANGERS.

GRRRRRRR

ROAR!
RAR K!

I .. I GUESS THAT
MAKES SENSE.

RAR K!

I SWEAR, I THOUGHT
HE WAS GOING TO SIC
THAT MONSTER ON ME.

I WONDER
IF SHE WOULD'VE
EATEN ME OR
JUST WENT FOR
THE JUGULAR
AND QUIT?

RARK!
RARARARK!

ARARARK!
RARARARK!

YOU MEAN
THIS BITCH HAS
BEEN BARKING
SINCE NOON?!

THAT'S LIKE
EIGHT HOURS!

RR!
RARK!

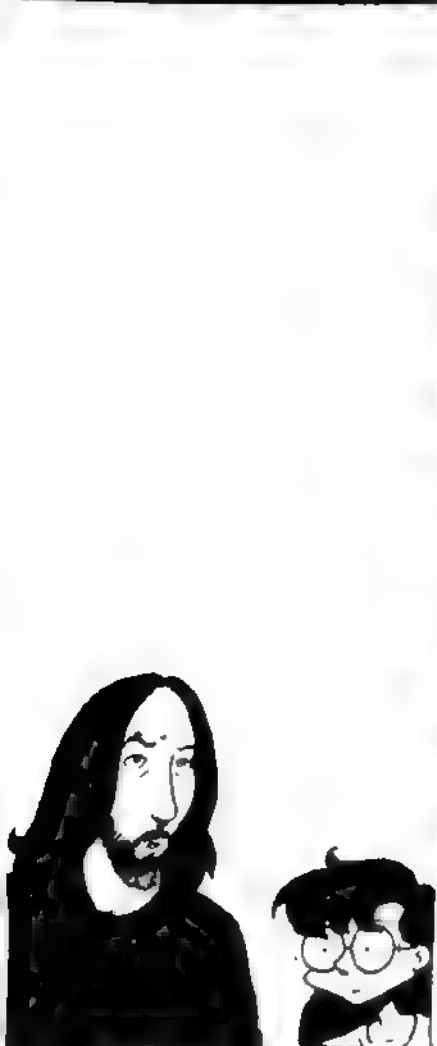
DON'T WORRY,
AFTER FOUR HOURS
YOU HARDLY EVEN
NOTICE.

RARK!
ARARAR
ARARARK!

AAH, HOW
MUCH LONGER
COULD IT GO
ON? RIGHT?

RARK!

RARK!



WHAT HAPPENED TO MY R2-D2?
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY G.I. JOE?
I CAN'T FIND MY EASY BAKE OVEN
WHERE DID MY MAGIC 8-BALL GO?

DID SOMEONE SEE MY FRANKENBERRY?
OR MY SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN?
GROOMS GHOULIES, I CAN'T SEE YOU
AT CRAZY EDDIE'S OR THOM McCAIN.

OH, GOD, WHERE
ARE YOU?
WHY DID YOU
HAVE TO LEAVE
ME THEN?



JANE, I
THINK I'LL LEAVE
FOR WORK A
LITTLE EARLY

THAT'S IT!
I'VE SNAPPED!
I CAN'T TAKE IT!

AAAAGH!
SHUT UP!

OHMYGOD
OHMYGOD
OHMYGOD
OHMYGOD.

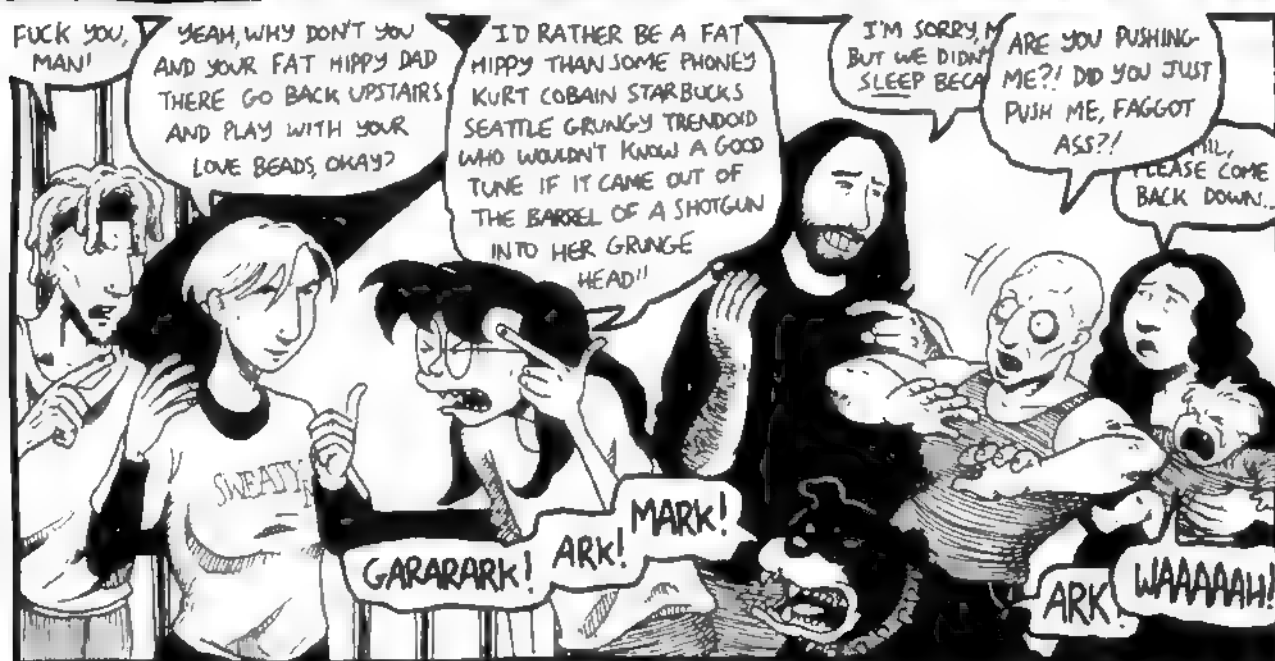
JANE,
HONEY!



QUIET!







YOU GO INSIDE
NOW... OR I AM
CALL POLKA, ANH?

FUCK!

I'M GO FOR FIVE
DAY, AND THIS IS
HOW YOU ARE!



AH-NE-MALS

AH-NE-MALS!



YOU NEED
ME, ANH?

:SNIFF:



YOU NEED
ME

YOU NEED
SORA TWEED.

TO CONTROL
OF ZOO, ANH?

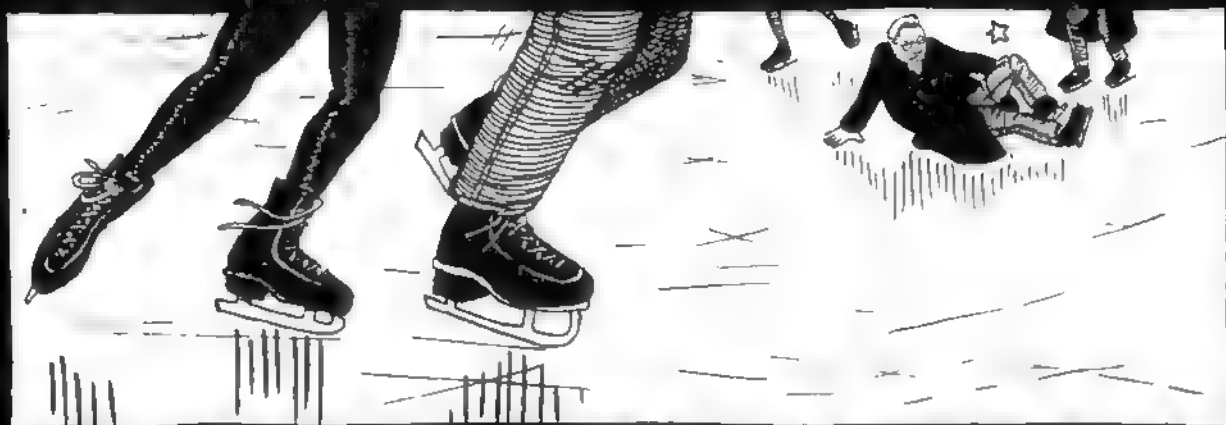
CONTROL!

NOW.. INSIDE AND QUIET







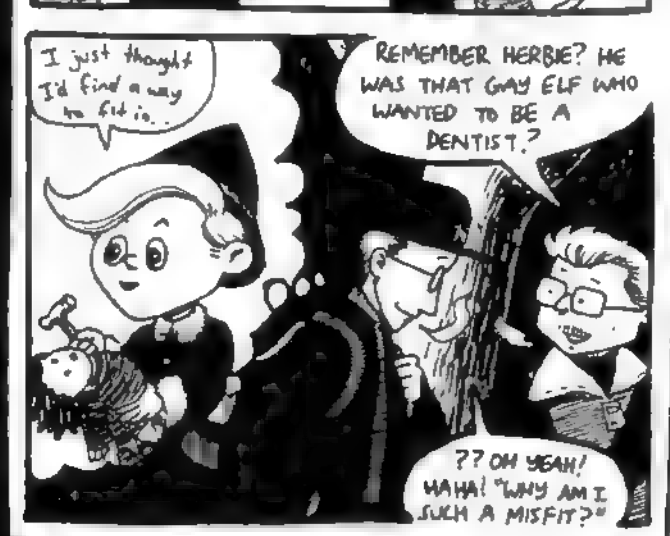


BUMBLES BOUNCE!











LAST TIME I TALKED TO SHERMAN HE WAS TRYING TO GET SOME OF HIS WRITING PUBLISHED IN MAGAZINES.

HAS HE HAD ANY LUCK?



WHAT?! DIDN'T HE TELL YOU?

TELL ME WHAT?

THE NEW YORKER BOUGHT ONE OF HIS STORIES! THEY'RE PUBLISHING HIS JOHN LENNON STORY!

WOW! THAT'S FANTASTIC!!



I KNOW! ISN'T IT, THOUGH?!

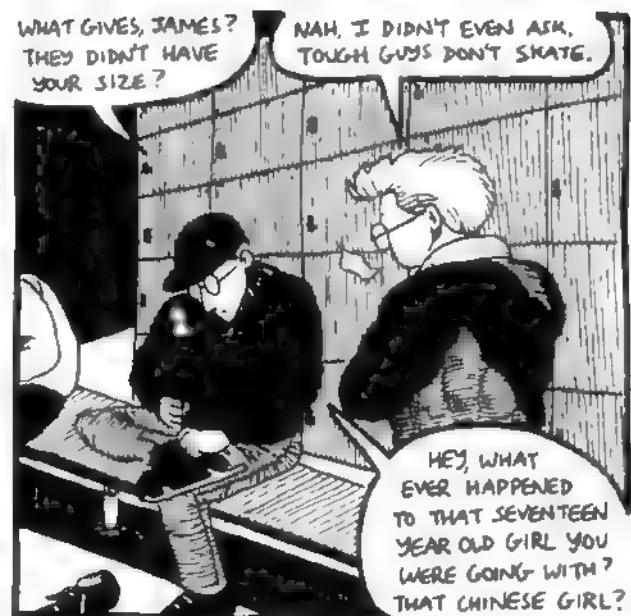


Haha you're not mad, are you?

MAD? NO.

THE SCARY PART IS I FIND IT ODDLY AROUSING.

11½, PLEASE.



WHAT GIVES, JAMES? THEY DIDN'T HAVE YOUR SIZE?

NAH, I DIDN'T EVEN ASK. TOUGH GUYS DON'T SKATE.

HEY, WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THAT SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD GIRL YOU WERE GOING WITH? THAT CHINESE GIRL?



FIRST OF ALL, SHE JUST TURNED SIXTEEN IN NOVEMBER, SECOND OF ALL SHE WAS JAPANESE.

THIRD OF ALL, WE BROKE UP TWO WEEKS AGO

JESUS, I'M SORRY. WHAT HAPPENED?



SHIT, SHE DUMPED ME
FOR SOME HEROIN DEALER
IN HER DRIVER'S ED CLASS.
WHAT THE HELL CAN
YOU DO? TRA-LA-LA-
LA, LIFE GOES ON.

WHOA...



WHAT ABOUT
YOU, ED? YOU STILL
A SWINGIN'
SINGLE?



WHO? ME?
OF COURSE.

I'VE GIVEN UP ON
TRYING TO GET LAID.
I'M DEVOTING ALL
OF MY SEXUAL
ENERGY TO MY
ART

SOUNDS LIKE
WE'RE IN FOR SOME
STICKY CANVASES.
DUCH,!



¿Y TÚ DAISY? SIENDO
UNA SEÑORITA TAN BONITA
Y FAMOSA DEBES DE
TENER UN NOVIDO.



¡HA HA! EHH...
NO NOS QUEDAMOS
EN UN LUGAR POR
MUCHO TIEMPO A
CAUSA DE LA
GIRA.

DAMN, YOU GUYS ARE
ALL READY TO GO! CAN YOU
WAIT UP WHILE...



JAMES, WAIT A MINUTE.
YOU DON'T GOT ANY
SKATES. WHAT'S--

I'M NOT--UH, I DON'T
REALLY... MY FOOT
SORT OF HURTS,
IS IT?

GET OUTTA HERE!
YOU ARE NOT GOING TO
BEG ME TO TEACH YOU
AND THEN BACK DOWN!



SO, HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS YET?

I SURE HAVE. LET'S TAKE A TRIP! LET'S GO TO EUROPE IN SPRING.

EU...UH, EUROPE?

COME ON! EUROPE WOULD BE, LIKE, SO GREAT!

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T AFFORD THAT, SA... DOROTHY.



OKAY, ENGLAND, THEN! WE COULD SEE ABBEY ROAD, ALL THE PALACES AND STUFF! TEA AND KRIMPETS AT KENSINGTON..

IMAGINE ALL THE BOOKS THEY HAVE THAT YOU CAN'T GET HERE



I DON'T KNOW...

SO, LIKE WHEN? APRIL? MAY?





HAHA!
I KNEW I'D
GET YOU WITH
THAT ONE!
YAY!

WELL... LET'S
THINK ABOUT IT.
BUT DON'T GET
YOUR HOPES UP.



SO... DO YOU
WANT TO KNOW
WHAT I GOT
YOU FOR
CHRISTMAS?

YOU GOT IT
ALREADY?!
WHAT IS
IT?!



CAN'T
TELL YOU!



COME ON! GIVE ME
A HINT. IS IT THAT
NEW BENCHLEY
BIOGRAPHY WE
SAW LAST WEEK?



CAN'T
TELL YOU,
BUD.



IS IT
THAT OUT OF
PRINT ARNOLD
ROTH BOOK I
MENTIONED?



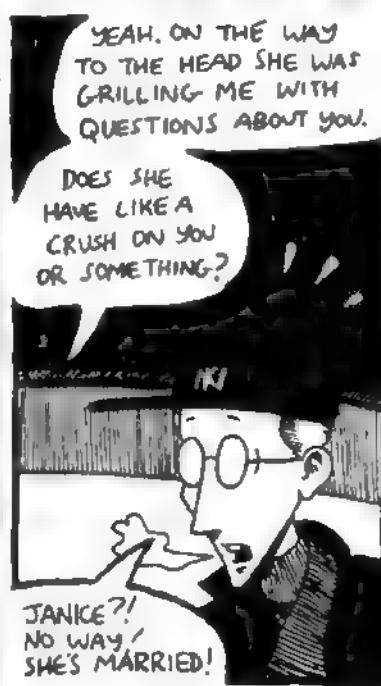
CAN'T.
TELL.
YOU.
OOH!
WAIT!



THAT BIG HARDCOVER
PHOTO BOOK BY THAT
PHOTOGRAPHER GUY I
SHOWED YOU AT THE
STRAND TWO WEEKS AGO?
WITH THE GIRL ON THE
COVER? HOLDING THOSE
TWO THINGS?



HEY, WHAT'S UP
WITH THAT GIRL
JANET, ANYWAY?
HUH? WHO,
JANICE?



YEAH. ON THE WAY
TO THE HEAD SHE WAS
GRILLING ME WITH
QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU.
DOES SHE
HAVE LIKE A
CRUSH ON YOU
OR SOMETHING?
JANICE?!
NO WAY!
SHE'S MARRIED!



HERE WE GO, MADEMOISELLE!
TWO PIPING HOT GENUINE
CHOCOLATE FLAVORED
DRINKS. BON APPETITE!



OKAY, NOW IT'S MY TURN
TO RUN TO THE BATHROOM.
MAKE SURE NO ONE RUNS
OFF WITH MY COCOA.
WILL YOU, DOLLFACE?



Why am I such
a misfit? I am not
just a nitwit.

Just because my
nose glows, I
just don't --







SHIT, THESE THINGS
ARE HARD TO WALK
AROUND IN!

SO WHERE ARE WE
REALLY GOING? THEY
SELL COCOA IN THE
LITTLE SNACK BA--

JAMES, WHAT THE
HELL IS THE MATTER
WITH YOU, HUH?

JANICE IS
FUCKING
MARRIED.

UHH..

YEAH.
SO?

I SAW YOU MAKING
OUT WITH HER BY THE
BATHROOMS.

OH.

Heh
Heh..

I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT. I
NEVER THOUGHT YOU
WOULD STOOP THAT
LOW. YOU DO--

FUCK YOU,
WHAT THE HELL
DO YOU MEAN
"STOOP --

I NEVER SAID A
WORD WHEN YOU CHEATED
ON LISA, I DIDN'T SAY
ANYTHING WHEN YOU WERE
SCREWING WITH THAT
HIGH SCHOOL KID...

THAT'S
YOUR BUSINESS.
WHATEVER.

BUT WHEN YOU'RE
WILLING TO FUCK UP
JANICE'S MARRIAGE,
JUST SO YOU CAN
GET SOME NEW--



FIRST OF ALL: GO FUCK YOURSELF.

JANICE HAS SOME PART IN THIS EQUATION TOO, YOU KNOW.

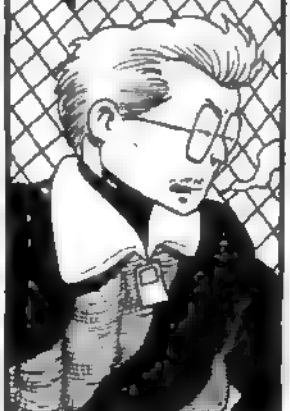
I'M NOT LIKE SOME FUCKING HOME WRECKING AVENGING ANGEL, FLYING IN OUT OF NOWHERE TO RUIN THIS BLISSFUL NEWLYWED PARADISE!



JANICE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT SHE'S DOING- AND IT'S HER MARRIAGE, SO HOW COME SHE'S NOT GETTING



BECAUSE I KNOW JANICE AND I KNOW SHE WON NEVER CHEAT ON



THEN I GUESS I KNOW HER A BIT BETTER THAN YOU DO.

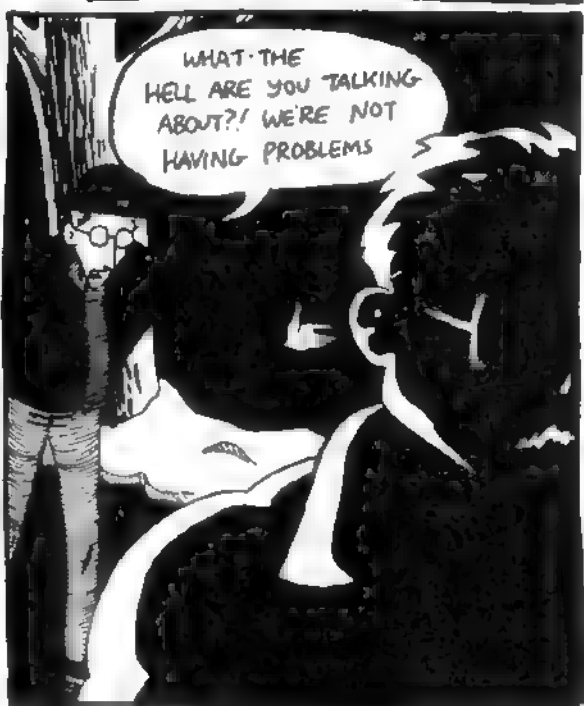


APPARENTLY SO.



AND SECOND OF ALL, DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON ME JUST BECAUSE YOU AND DOROTHY ARE HAVING PROBLEMS.

WHAT?!



WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! WE'RE NOT HAVING PROBLEMS



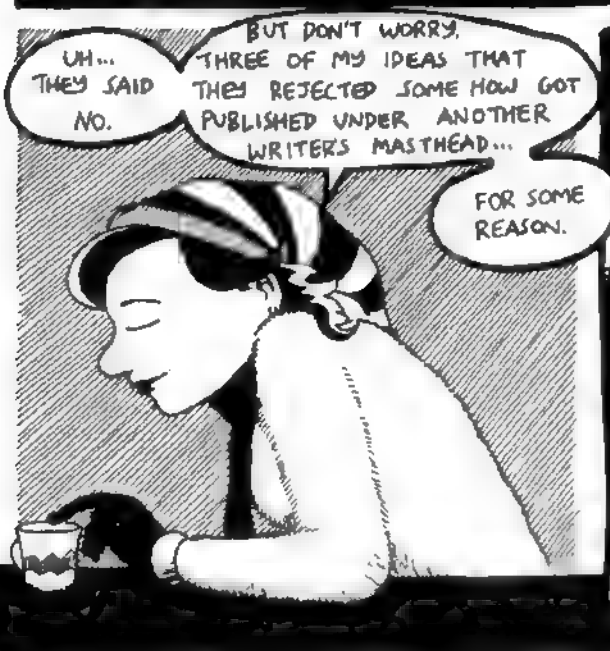
AHHHH...

ED,

I TALKED TO MY EDITOR ABOUT DOING THAT STORY ABOUT YOUR ARTIST FRIEND..



REALLY?
WHAT DID THEY SAY?
BECAUSE THIS WEEK HE'S SUPPOSED...



UH... THEY SAID NO.

BUT DON'T WORRY, THREE OF MY IDEAS THAT THEY REJECTED SOME HOW GOT PUBLISHED UNDER ANOTHER WRITERS MASTHEAD...

FOR SOME REASON.



BUT THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE ... IT WAS YOUR IDEA!

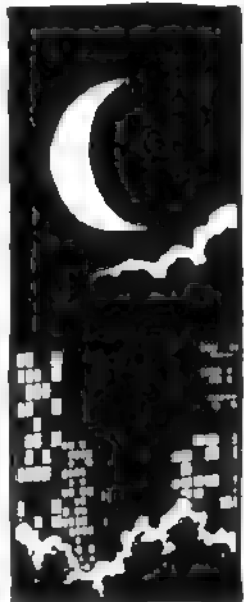


SHERMAN! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?



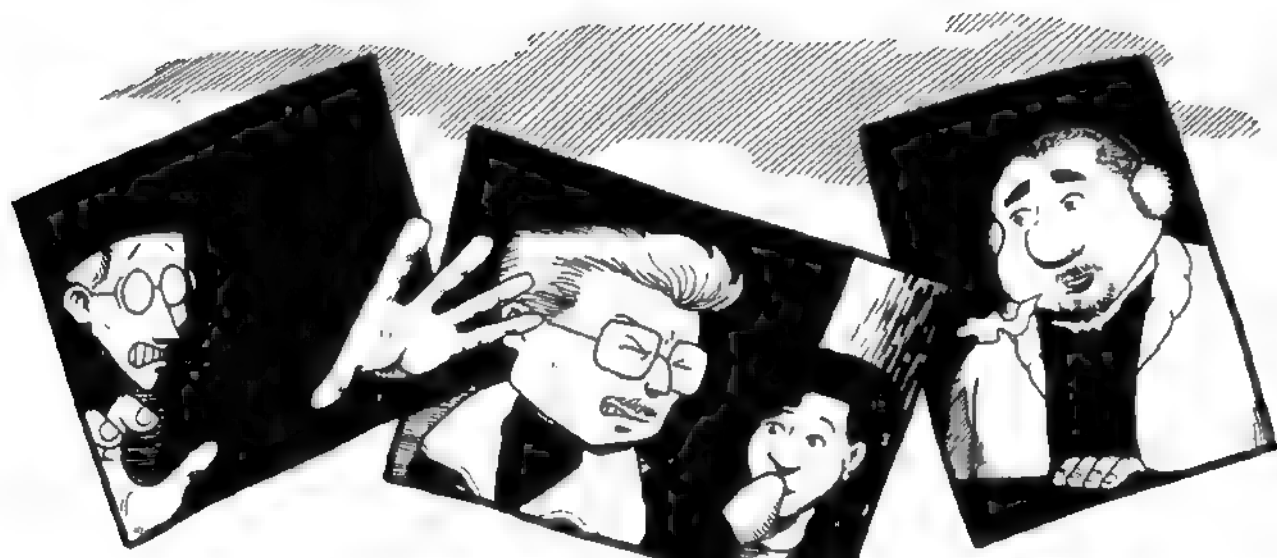


















WHAT ARE A FEW OF YOUR FAVORITE THINGS?



HALLOWEEN.
CATS
OH! AND
FINISHING A
DRAWING.



FRANK SINATRA,
SLEEPING LATE
AND THE TWO MOST
BEAUTIFUL WORDS IN
THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE:
"CHECK
ENCLOSED."



PIÑA COLADA,
MOJARMÉ EN
LA LLUVIA, HACER
EL AMOR A LA
MEDIANOCHE
(SOBRE LAS
DUNAS DEL
CABO).



ABRAHAM
LINCOLN, "BREAKFAST
OF CHAMPIONS" BY
KURT VONNEGUT,
MONTAUK AND
JANE PEKAR
AWWW...



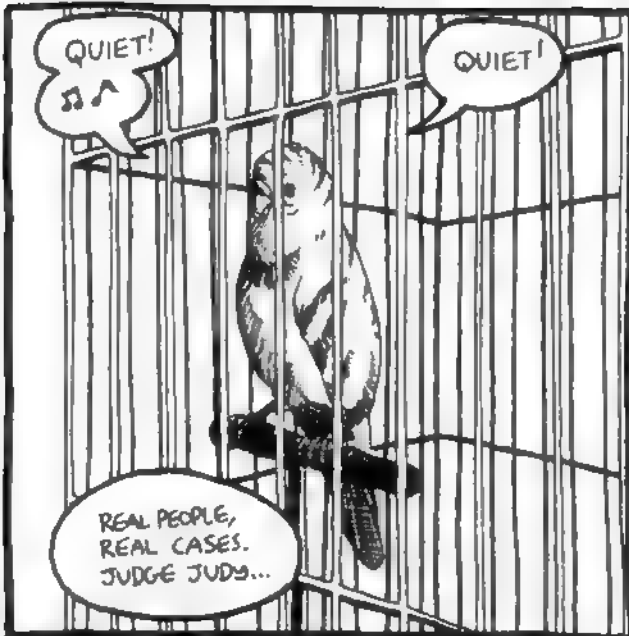
LEMME SEE...
"NIGHTSTALKER" #22,
THE ONE WITH THE
HITLER ROBOT, "A
TOUCH OF EVIL"
AND LOUIS
ARMSTRONG.



S.J. PERELMAN,
"SONS OF THE DESERT"
...UH, "WHAT GOES ON"
BY THE VELVET
UNDERGROUND.
(THE "LIVE 1969"
VERSION)



MOONPIES, TYRA
BANKS, JERRY
SPRINGER AND
THE "STAR WARS"
TRILOGY.
THANK YOU
AND GOOD
NIGHT.



QUIET!

QUIET!

REAL PEOPLE,
REAL CASES.
JUDGE JUDS...



POLICE ARE QUESTIONING
MAXWELL ABOUT THE BRUTAL
MURDERS.

SPEAKING OF
BRUTAL MURDERS, HERE'S
AL TO TELL US ABOUT
SOME BRUTAL WEATHER
HEADING OUR WAY.
AL?



HE BEATS YOU,
INSULTS YOU AND NOW
HE'S SLEEPING WITH YOUR
SISTER! WHY DO YOU
STAY WITH HIM?!

CUZ
AH LUV
'IM.

AWWWW



THE TARGET AREA
IS ONLY TWO METERS WIDE.
IT'S A SMALL THERMAL
EXHAUST PORT, RIGHT BELOW
THE MAIN PORT. THE..



JORDAN WILL REMAIN
A FACTOR. HE HAS COME TO
PLAY, THAT'S FOR SURE. HE'S
EIGHT FOR NINE TODAY SO...
IT'S UP... AND IT'S GOOD!



ARE YOU DEPRESSED?
TIRED OF LIFE? NEED
ANSWERS? HI, I'M KIM
"TOOTIE" FIELDS HERE TO
TELL YOU ABOUT THE
PSYCHIC PSISTERS
CONNECTION.



BUT MR FLAVOR, ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT WE SHOULD HAVE A LAWYER GO WITH US. THAT--

FIRST OF ALL, THERE AIN'T NO US! YOU AIN'T GOIN INTO THIS MEETING.

SECOND OF ALL, I DON'T NEED NO SHARK IN THERE WITH HIS METER RUNNIN'.

I'VE BEEN HANDLING CHUMPS LIKE J.C. FOR A LONG TIME, JEE?



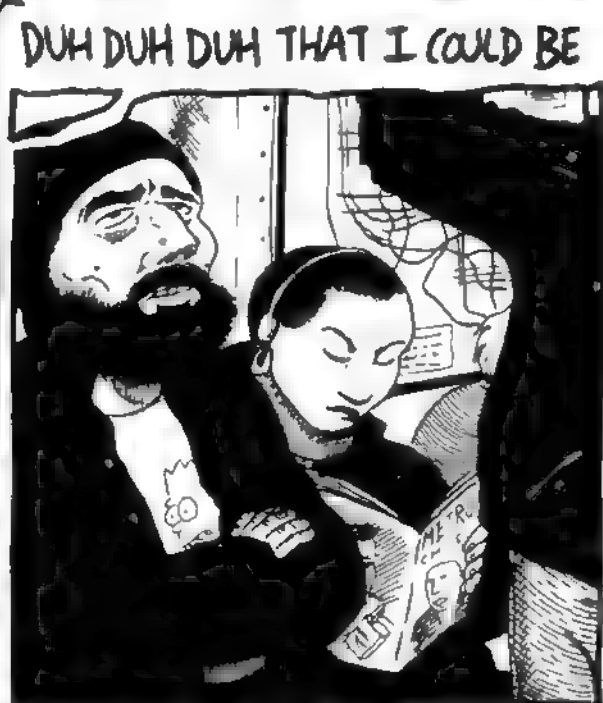
OH YEAH, AND LOOK HOW GREAT THAT TURNED OUT.

WHAT?



ZIS IZZEELLE DRAINDOO AYETHAVENDOO ZTANGLEER OFFTOORS Bing-Bong!







ME? NO, I MEAN THEY
LOOK LIKE THEY'RE FUN
AND EVERYTHING, AND
MY LITTLE NEPHEW
LOVES THEM.

I GUESS I ALWAYS
JUST THINK COMICS
ARE FOR KIDS,
RIGHT?

YEAH.
YOU'RE RIGHT

KATHLEEN, DID
ROSE COME BY AND
GIVE YOU THOSE
PROOFS FOR "HELL
CAT" #27 YET?

NO, PAULIE.
SHE SAID BRAYSHAW
WAS STILL WORKING
ON THE COLOR.

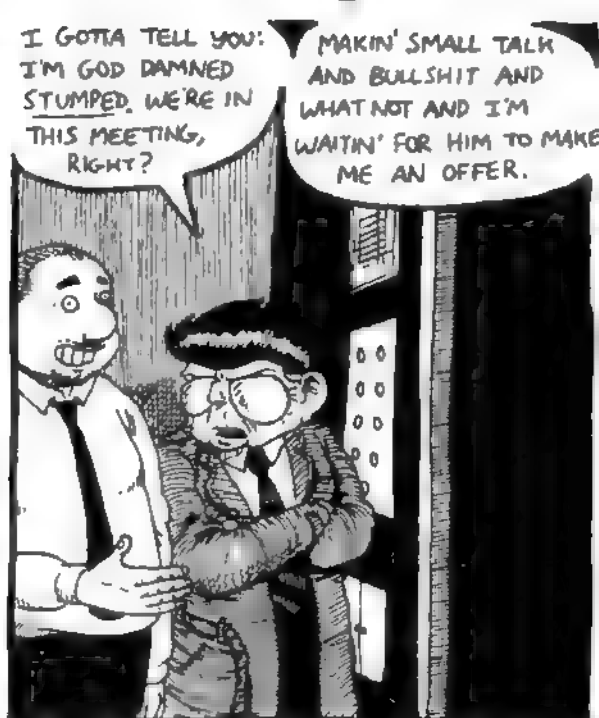
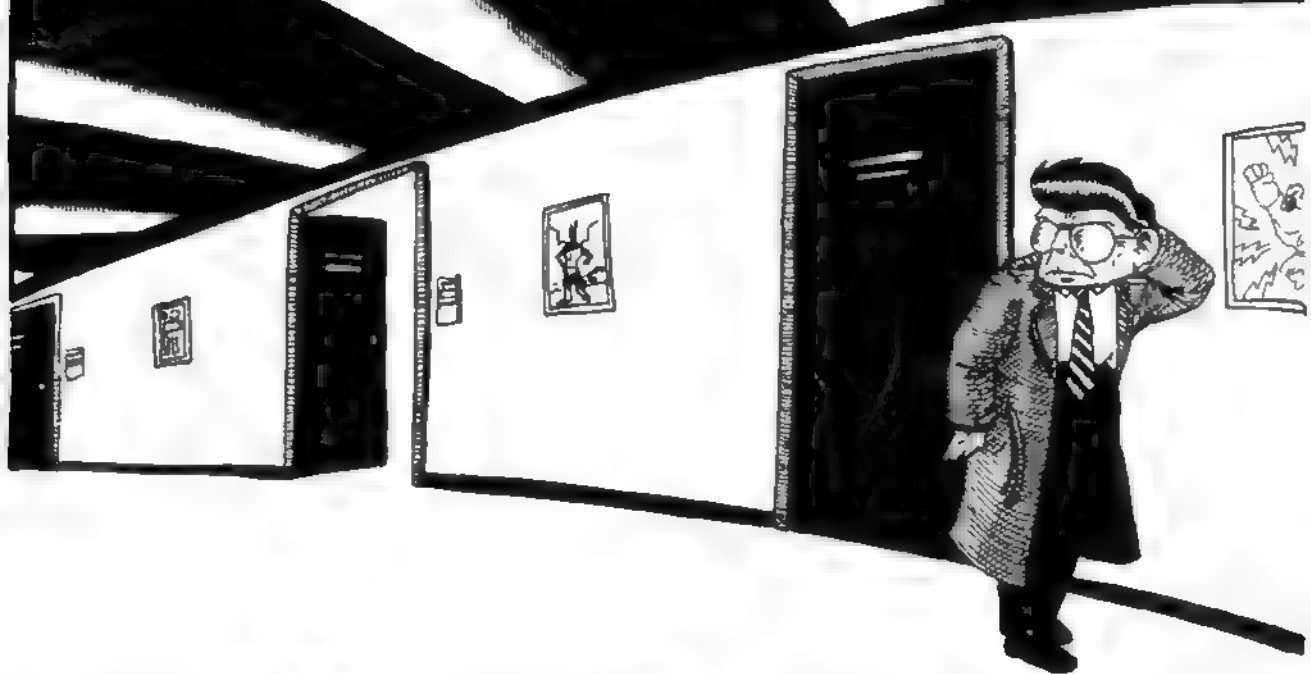
BRAYSHAW'S DOING
IT? TELL ROSIE TO
SEND THAT ASSHOLE
TO MY OFFICE.

I'M SICK
OF HIS...

...HIS...

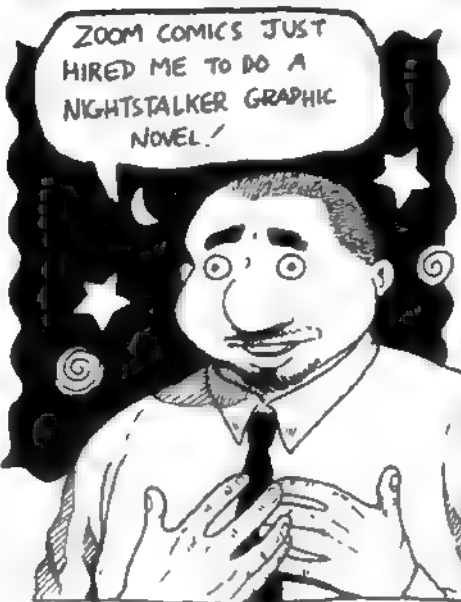
ED, YOU COULD DO A
LOT WORSE THAN BEING
HIS ASSISTANT. GIVE
HIM A CALL.

IRVING
FLAVOR, HUH?





"SO AFTER HE GETS OFF THE PHONE, IT'S BACK TO THE BULLSHIT! HOW'VE I BEEN DOING, WHO'VE I BEEN WORKIN' FOR, ETCETERA."



When Titans Clash!

Just in time for the holiday crunch, Cadbury films has released the home video version of "Nightstalker IV", the summer blockbuster which grossed an eye popping \$300 million. In fact, the success of the latest sequel has made the series the most successful series financially at least—of all time. Including the sales figures on action figures, bed spreads, halloween costumes, the animated series and literally hundreds of other spin offs would make croesus blush.

The Video Vault in Driggs Avenue in Brooklyn has fifteen copies of the "Nightstalker IV" to rent and they are all out on this Saturday morning. The Vault is typical in this regard, but is very unusual in another: two doors down, up a three story walk up, in a one bedroom apartment which doubles as a studio is an old man with a fantastic secret.

His name is Irving Flavor and half a century ago, he created The Nightstalker.

And then sold him for \$55.





Irving Flavor was all of sixteen years old when he was first employed by Zoom Comics and signed a "work-for-hire" contract. It stated that any work he would create during his time with the company—and he would work there for nearly thirty years—would be owned lock, stock and barrel by Simon LeBlanc, publisher of Zoom Comics.

Nevermind that Irving was the first one to come up with the character, or was the first one to write and draw his adventures. Never mind, in fact, that he was the *only* one to create the stories for the first ten years of Nightstalker's existence. Most of the characteristics of the world's most famous vigilante ("*Justice comes by night!*") are details created by Irving Flavor. Nevermind any of that: Nightstalker is the property of Zoom Comics and a more golden goose would be hard to contemplate.

Ed Velasquez, Irving's assistant on what few art jobs whimper his way, doesn't think that's right. It was Ed who persuaded Irving to try to get

BUT HE'D BE WORKING FOR THE SAME CORPORATE SWINE WHO ARE RIPPING YOU OFF!

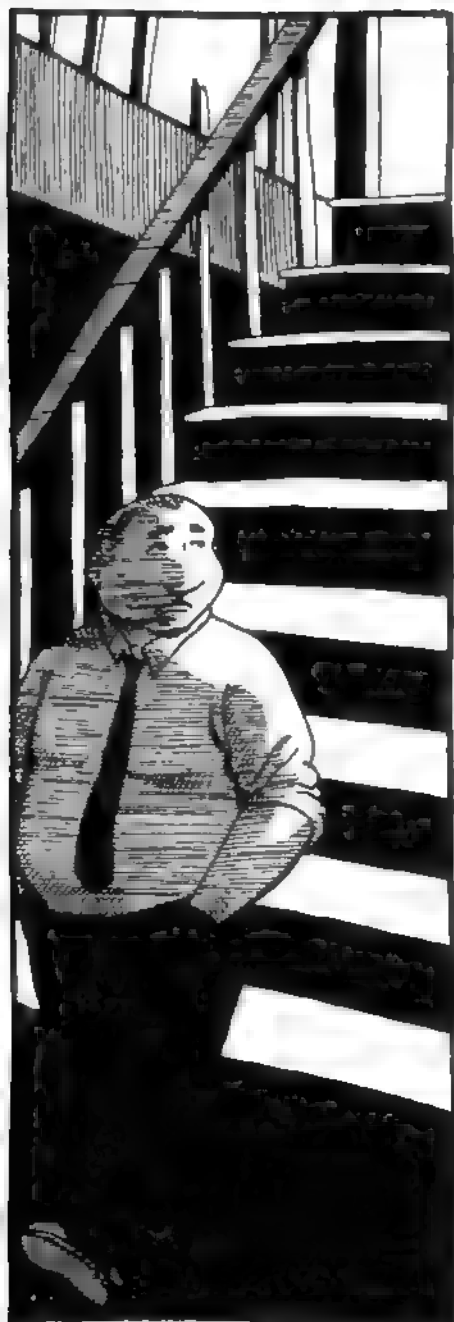
HE WOULD BE ONE OF THOSE CORPORATE SWINE!



BZZZ!

YOU CAN'T SHAKE THE DEVIL'S HAND AND SAY YOU'RE ONLY KIDDING.

YOU BETTER GET THE DOOR.

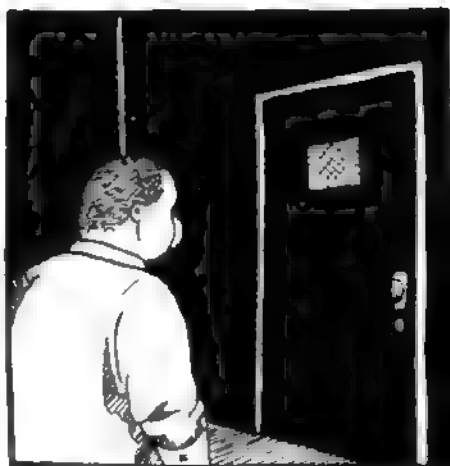


Zoom Comics to at last give him what he had coming: financial security, a steady job, and at long last, recognition of his hand in the creatin of Nightstalker. Without him, Zoom Comics would've gone out of business decades ago, instead of being the largest publisher of comic books on the planet.

"As soon as I realized that comic books were made up and drawn by real people and not carved in stone by gods or something, I knew that that's what I wanted to do when I grew up" Ed reveals, a smile crossing his face "I was nineteen at the time."

Ironically, it was Zoom Comics itself who recommended that Ed begin his cartooning career as an apprentice to a seasoned pro. An editor there gave him Irving's number and the rest is, with hope, history.

"It's really sad and disgusting. If Mr. Flavor had been a guy who made movies, like George Lucas or somebody, he'd be a multi-trillionaire and retired by now. But in comics, ripping



NOW, LET'S SEE IF I'VE GOT THIS STRAIGHT...



FIRST, YOU TELL ED THAT YOUR EDITOR PASSED ON YOUR IDEA FOR A STORY ON FLAVOR.



NOW, SUDDENLY OUT OF THE BLUE, YOU SHOW UP AND REVEAL THAT NOT ONLY IS THE STORY BACK ON! BUT THEY'VE SENT YOU -- THE ASSISTANT EDITOR ON THE "ENTERTAINMENT LISTINGS" SECTION --

TO COVER IT.



THAT'S RIGHT

ED, I'D SAY THAT THIS IS YOUR LUCKY DAY!



SO HOW DO YOU WANT TO WORK IT? YEAH! SHOULD YOU AND MR. FLAVOR GO...



BECAUSE WHILE YOU TWO MIGHT HAVE FALLEN FOR HER LITTLE STORY, I LIVED WITH HER AND I KNOW WHEN SHE'S LYING!!

WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!





The first surprising thing about Irving Flavor—and there are many—is that he doesn't *look* like a fighter. But when one takes into account that this man has drawn comic books (home of secret identities and bespectacled nerds with superpowers) all his life, it makes perfect, poetic sense. Of course! The person who created a musclebound crime fighter who can deck a mugger with one right book would be a short, quiet and gentle man.

"I admit, Eddie practically had to twist my ~~god~~ damned arm to get me to do this" Irving concedes, slightly embarrassed to be the center of so much hoopla. "I didn't want to make ~~me~~ trouble. I just want my fair share."

Despite the fact that he's slowly losing his eyesight and his drawing hand isn't as steady as it used to be, Irving would liked nothing better than to return to the company he helped build and the character he created.

"I worked on Nightstalker for ten years" he chuckles "That's longer than most marriages!"

Irving was born and raised in Brooklyn, where he still lives. His







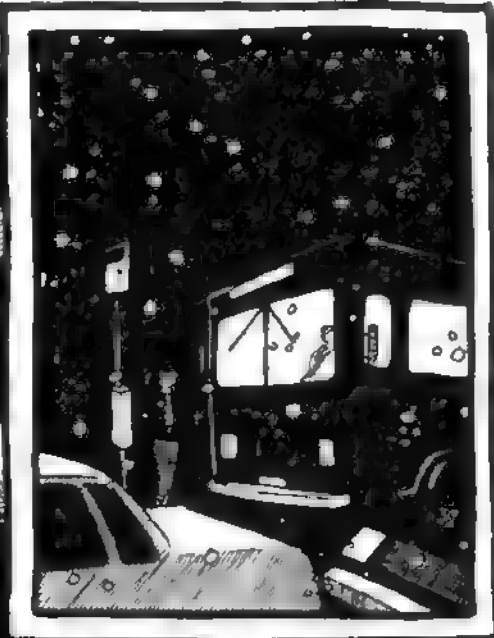
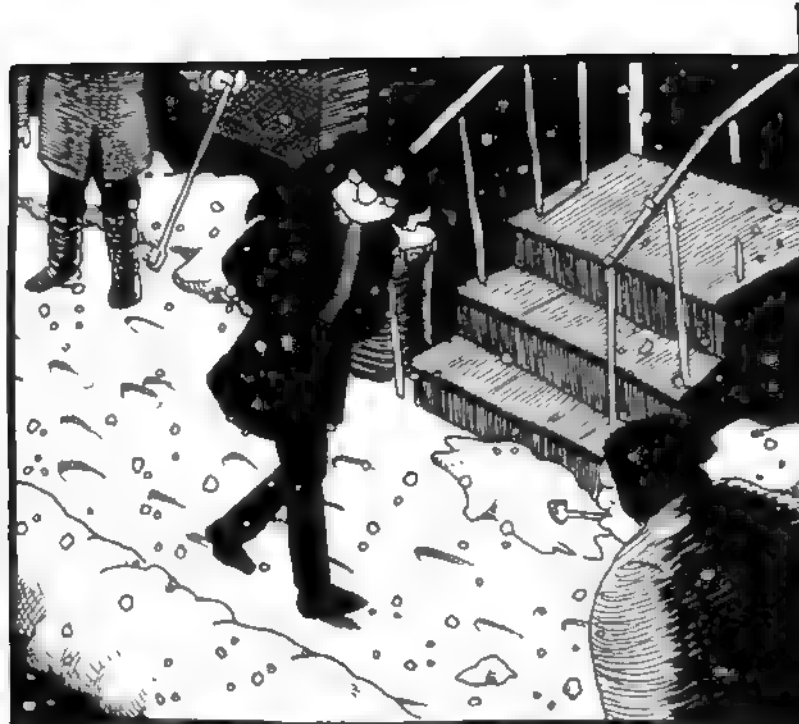
was a great man "used his heart his head and his brain- built zoom up from nothing"-went fishing in westchester-believes murder was a robbery-most of his coworkers from that time dead definitely not working anymore-arthur epstein-len levant-tony gilligan-work dried up for old timers-crowning achievements?-nightstalker 44-"armor hammer and sickle"-teamed up villain admiral armor with josef stalin to try to kill John Wayne-good lesson for kids-fighting nazis in comics promoted patriotism



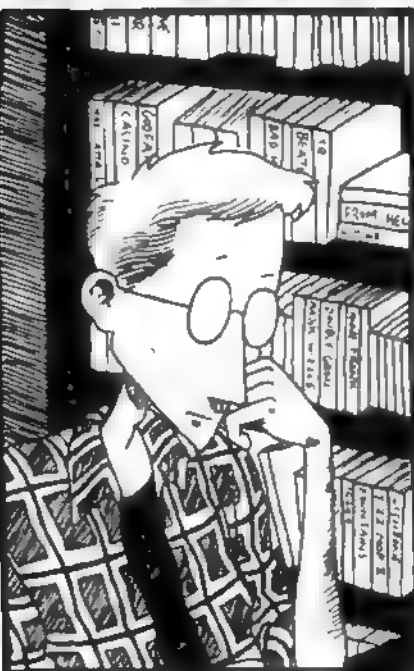
alot of talk today about comics as "art"-doesn't get it-"half of them don't make any god damned sense"-no one can tell a story clearly-"stories never ran more than ten pages, now you got stories that run for ten issues and nothing fucking happens"- doesn't read much anymore except newspaper-hasn't seen any of the nightstalker movies-was lent a tape but doesn't have vcr-only person who could've played nightstalker-douglas fairbanks-would go back to work for zoom if given chance-doesnt







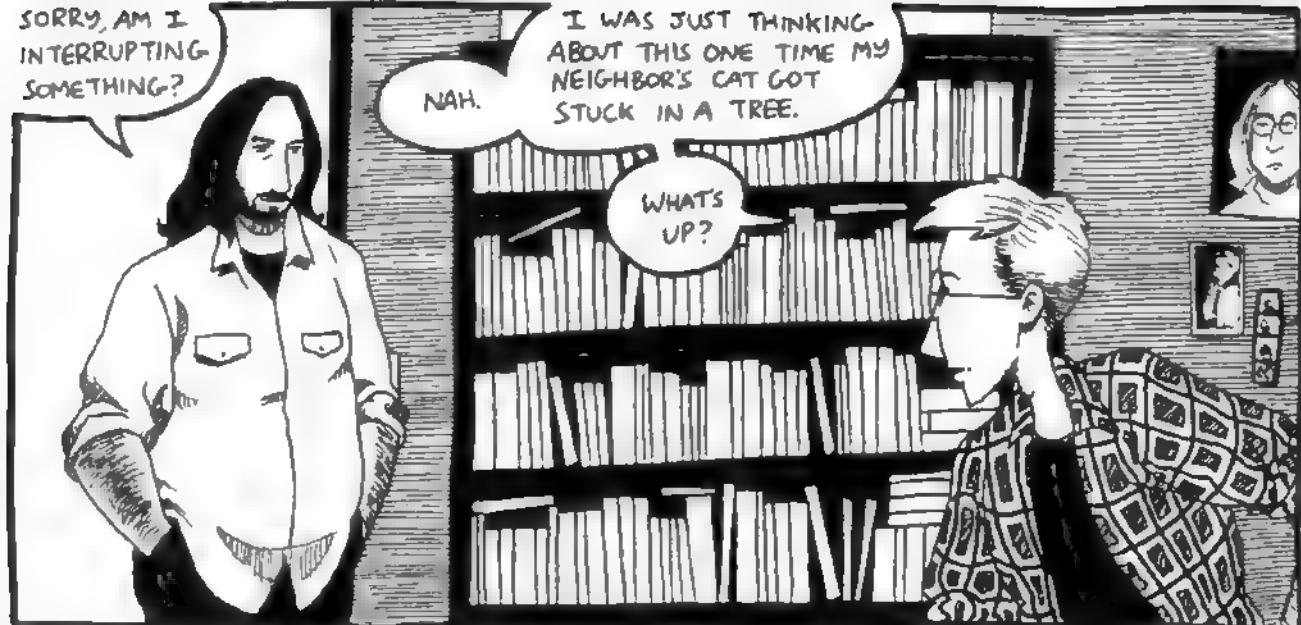
Apology

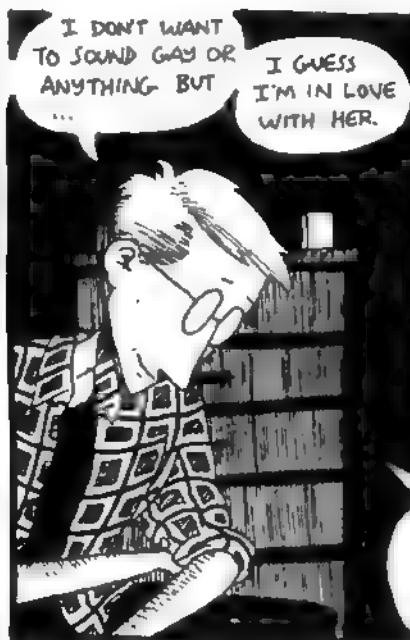
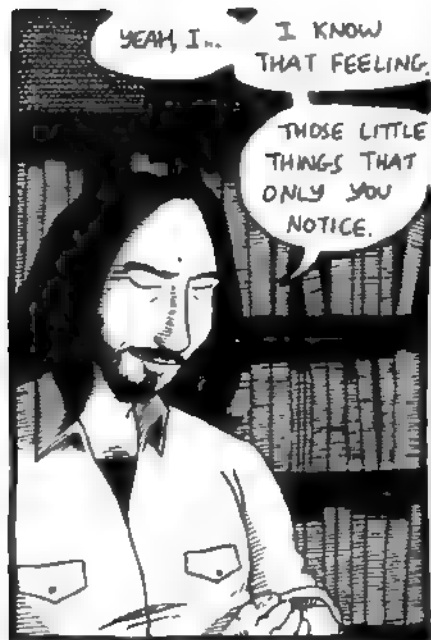




IT'S BEEN ROUGH ON ALL OF US, NOT JUST ME.







HAVE YOU READ THIS NEW ONE? ABOUT THE TEN WORST PRESIDENTS?

HE HAS A SORT OF "BONUS" CHAPTER ABOUT THE TWO MOST OVER-RATED ONES.

CARE TO GUESS?

STEPHEN, SHE ...UH...

DOROTHY TOLD ME WHAT... ABOUT THAT, UH, INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED.

WHEN SHE LIVED HERE.

WHICH INCIDENT WAS THAT? THEY HAPPENED ABOUT EVERY HOUR WHEN SHE LIVED HERE.

WELL, :them: YOU KNOW, THAT TIME YOU. SHE TOLD ME WHEN YOU... YOU...

HONEY! I'M HOME!

WERE IN HERE!

IN SHERMAN'S ROOM!

SO WAIT A SECOND: WHAT HAPPENED?

I MEAN, IT'S NO BIG DEAL, YOU KNOW.

I JUST THOUGHT :them: WELL, SINCE WE WERE BEING :them:

I MEAN, IT'S NOT A BIG, UH A BIG THING.

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT STUPID COW LAND LADY STILL HASN'T SHOVELED THE STOOP?

I SHOULD PURPOSELY FALL AND SUE HER SORRY ASS.

I HAVEN'T SEEN OR HEARD HER ALL DAY

AAAH, SHE'S PROBABLY OUT RIDING HER BROOMSTICK OR SOMETHING.

OH YEAH! THAT REMINDS ME: DOROTHY WAS AT MR. FLAVOR'S AND SHE GAVE ME THIS TO GIVE TO YOU.

HUH?
THANKS.

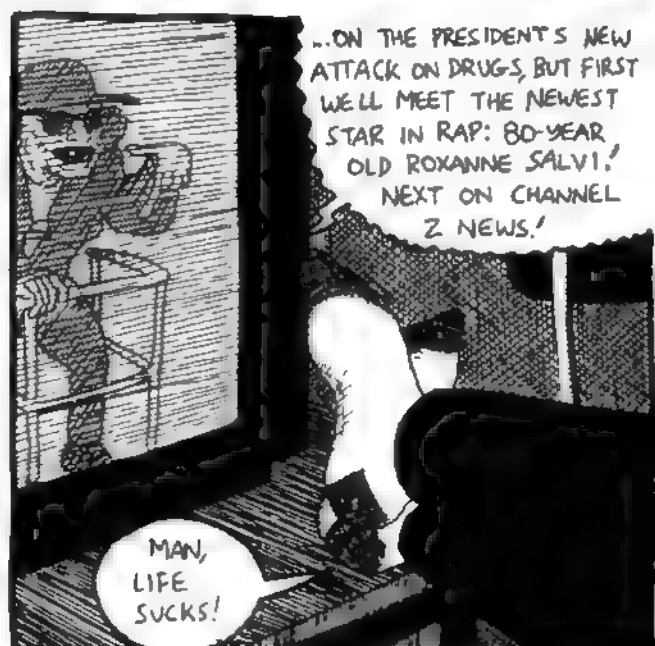
OH, DR. VICTORY CALLED AND SAID IT'S TIME FOR BIG NOSE TO COME IN FOR HIS ANNUAL CHECK-UP.

UM-HUH.

I MADE AN APPOINTMENT FOR NEXT FRIDAY. THAT WAS THE SOONEST THEY COULD DO IT.

YEAH.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

BUT THEN I CHANGED MY MIND, CANCELLED THE VET AND CHOPPED BIG NOSE UP AND MADE HIM INTO TACOS.





KLICK! HI, THIS IS DOROTHY LESTRADE AND I'M NOT TAKING ANY CALLS AT THE MOMENT, SO PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AT THE BEEP. THANKS!



ZOOM COMICS AND ITS PARENT COMPANIES HAVE NO COMMENT AT THIS TIME. THANK YOU.



looking back.

"I just want to get what's coming to me" he laments. "I just want my fair share."

Tomorrow he'll go back to work. He managed to snag one of the best paying jobs he's gotten since Ed has come aboard: an illustration for a plumber's union newsletter. "There's no shame in an honest day's work" he comments wistfully. "An honest day's pay for an honest day's work."

Even if that day was over fifty years ago...

BEEP! UH, HELLO, THIS IS SUSAN LEBOWSKI CALLING FROM ZOOM COMICS IN REFERENCE TO...



WHAT
DO YOU
WANT
FOR
X
MAS?

THE SEARS
STAR WARS
CANTINA
PLAYSET.

WITH THE TALL
SNAGGLETOOTH.



A CYLON
RAIDER AND
"THE RETURN
OF THE GREAT
BRAIN".



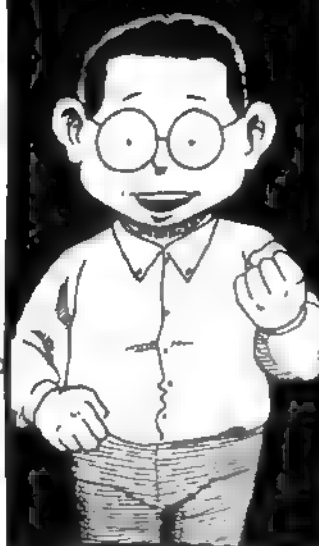
SHRINKY
DINKS



A SHAWN
CASSIDY POSTER
AND A CUTE
LITTLE
PUPPY!



A RED
RUDER BB GUN
RIFLE WITH A
COMPASS IN
THE STOCK.



A
HUFFY THREE
SPEED WITH THE
BRAKES ON THE
HANDLE BARS.

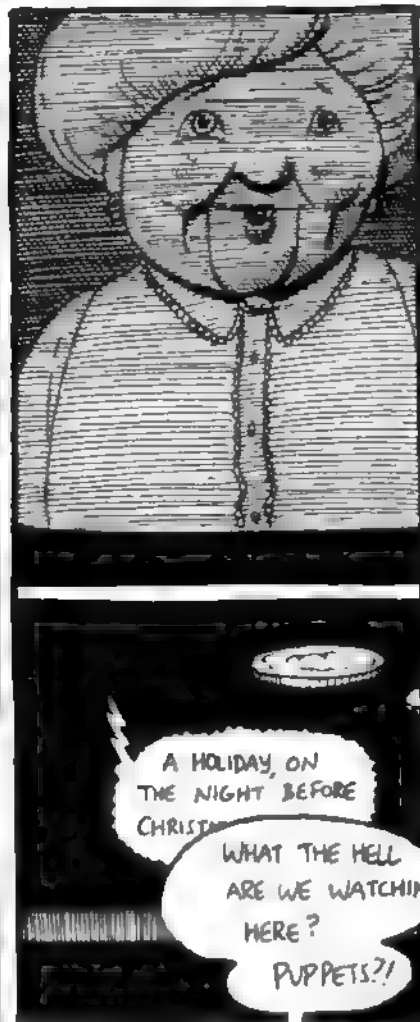


ZOOM
COMICS.



Irving's Christmas





ED

'S CHRISTMAS



THERE'S MY COUSIN
HECTOR,
THE STOCK MARKETEEER
WHO MADE AS MUCH LAST
WEEK
AS I MADE LAST YEAR.



DRUNK UNCLE EARL ASKS
FOR THE THIRD TIME
TODAY

"YOU STILL AIN'T GOT A
GIRLFRIEND?
YOU SURE YOU AINT A
GAY?"



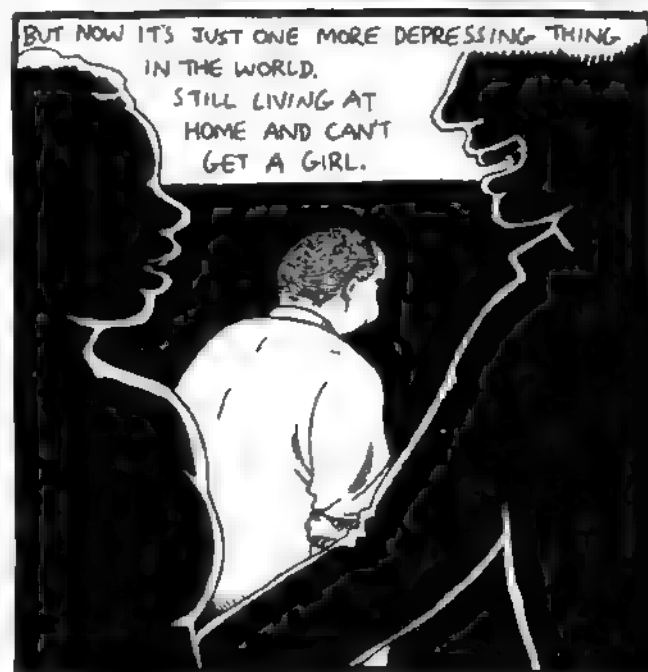
HERE COMES AUNT CLARA

YOU KNOW, HECTOR'S
A BROKER. HE'D GIVE
YOU A JOB.



I MENTION MY JOB
(WHY I BOTHER I'M NOT
SURE)
AND HOW I WANT TO
DRAW COMICS.





SURROUNDED BY JOY
I'M AN ISLAND OF GLOOM
SO WHERE ELSE TO GO
BUT THE WOMB OF MY
ROOM?



SO I OPEN MY DOOR AND WHAT DO I SPY?
MY TODDLER COUSINS BOTH BARELY THIGH HIGH!



QUICKLY MY MIND RACED TO WHEN I WAS A
LAD
TODAY'S CHRISTMAS DAY! HOW CAN THAT BE



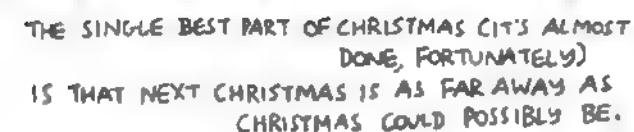
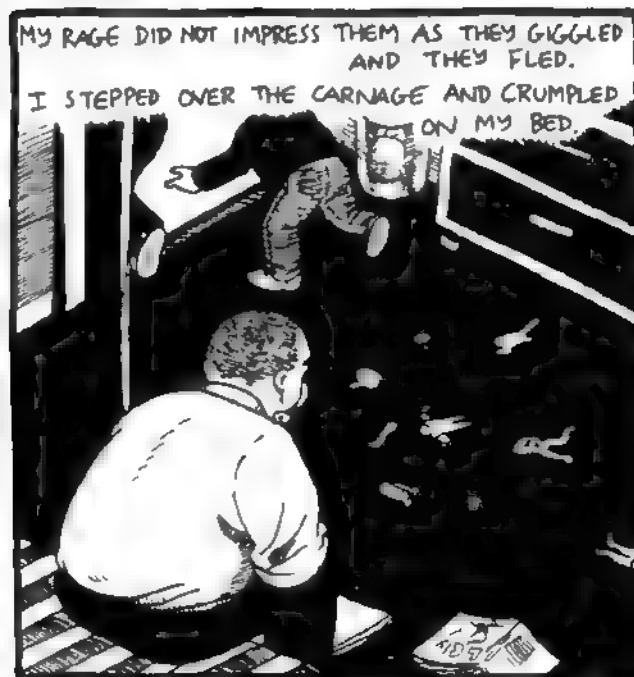
JUST SEEING THEM PLAYING, CONTENT AND HAPPY,
MY COCKLES WERE WARMED AND I FELT MUCH
LESS CRAPPY.



UNTIL I NOTICED THAT IN THE HANDS
OF THESE BOYS --
IN THE MOUTHS OF THESE BOYS WERE
MY "STAR WARS" TOYS!

OH MY GOD! BOBA FETT! HIS LEFT ARM IS TORN OFF!
THERE'S GOVERNOR TARKIN - NOW NOT SO
'GRAND A MOFF...



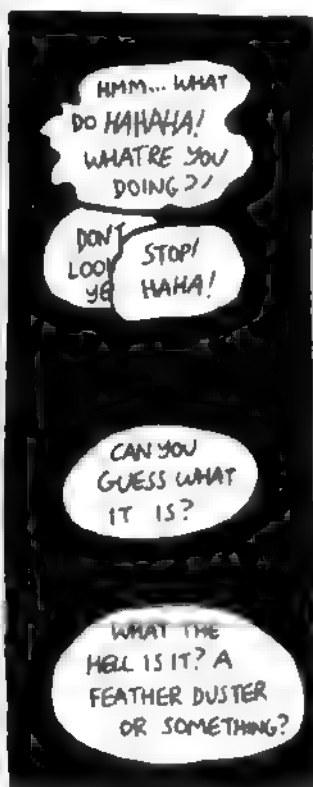
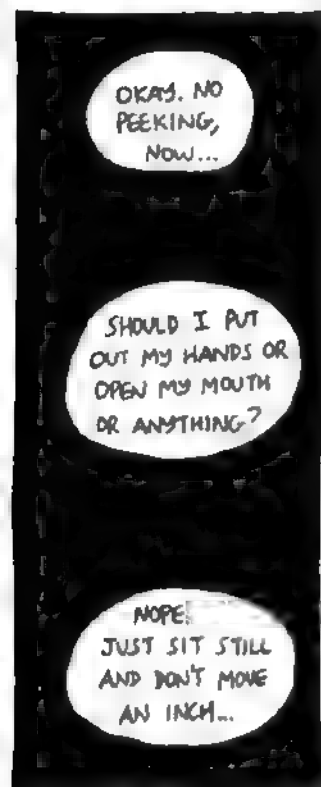




D&C DOROTHY HERMAN'S CHRISTMAS



"FOR THAT WE HAVE TO GO BACK TO MY PLACE..."





MERRY
CHRISTMAS,
BABY!

OH MY
GOD!



ISN'T HE A
SWEETIE-PIE? THEY
SAID HIS NAME IS
PORKY, BUT WE CAN
CHANGE IT.

Heh
Heh..

Heh.

WAIT A
MINUTE! HERE'S
THE BEST
PART!

YAP!



TWINS!

YOU... YOU
GOT ME
- OOPS!

YAP!
YAP!

YOU GOT ME
TWO DOGS?



NO! ONE'S FOR
YOU AND THE
GIRL ONE'S
FOR ME!

HE'S REALLY
GREAT, BUT I
DON'T KNOW IF
WE --

I DON'T KNOW
IF I CAN KEEP
HIM RIGHT
NOW.

WHAT?
WHY
NOT?



I DON'T KNOW IF WE'RE ALLOWED TO HAVE A DOG. YOU KNOW HOW MRS. TWEED IS.

PLUS, I HAVE TO CHECK WITH JANE AND STEPHEN.



THEY WOULDN'T LET YOU GET A PET? IT'S YOUR APARTMENT, TOO!

BESIDES, THEY HAVE A CAT, SO WHY CAN'T --

YAP!
YAP!



EXACTLY! SO I THINK IT WOULD ONLY BE FAIR FOR ME TO CHECK --

Sigh



HOW ABOUT WE FIGHT ABOUT THIS WHEN WE GET BACK?

I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT ABOUT IT AT ALL!



HOW ABOUT THIS:

YOU ASK STEPHEN AND JANE IF IT'S OKAY. IF IT IS, GREAT.

IF IT'S NOT WE'LL KEEP BOTH OF THEM HERE UNTIL...



UNTIL WHAT?

UNTILL... I DON'T KNOW.

BUT I'D RATHER ARGUE ABOUT IT THEN THAN ON CHRISTMAS EVE.





WOW... I AM TRULY IMPRESSED BY THIS NEW FOUND MATURITY.

HA!
HAPPY CHRISTMAS!



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NAME "WATSON"?

FOR THE DOG I MEAN.

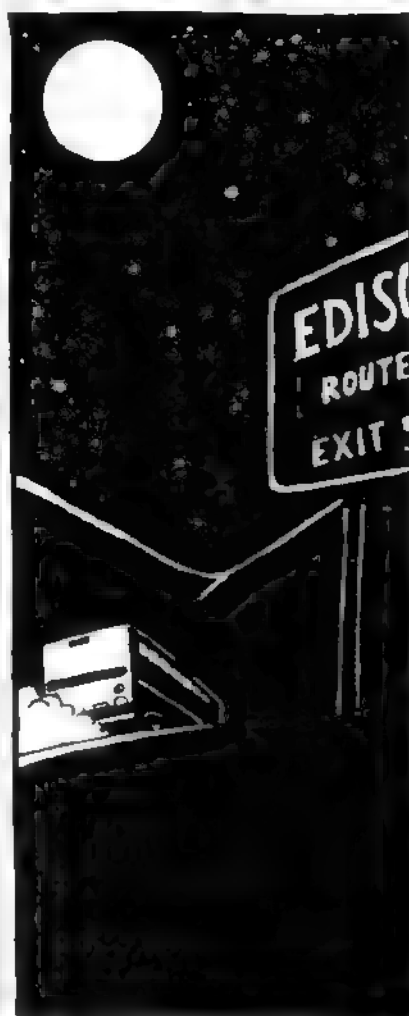
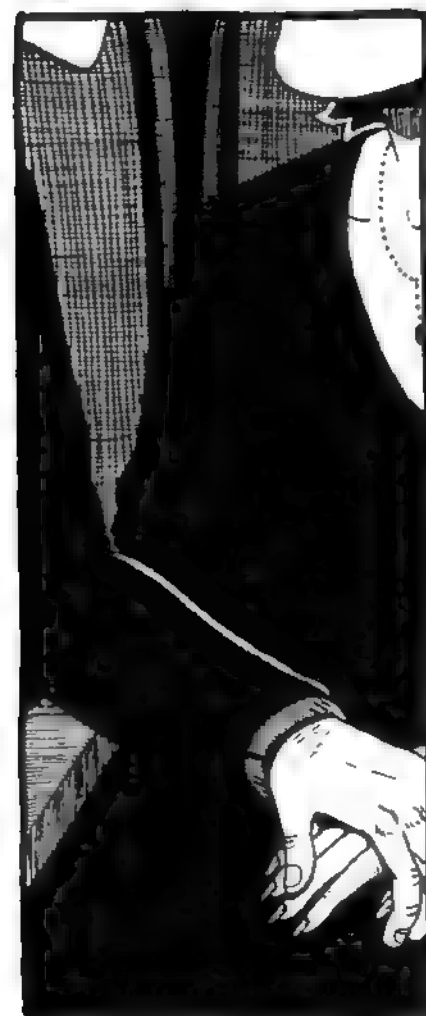
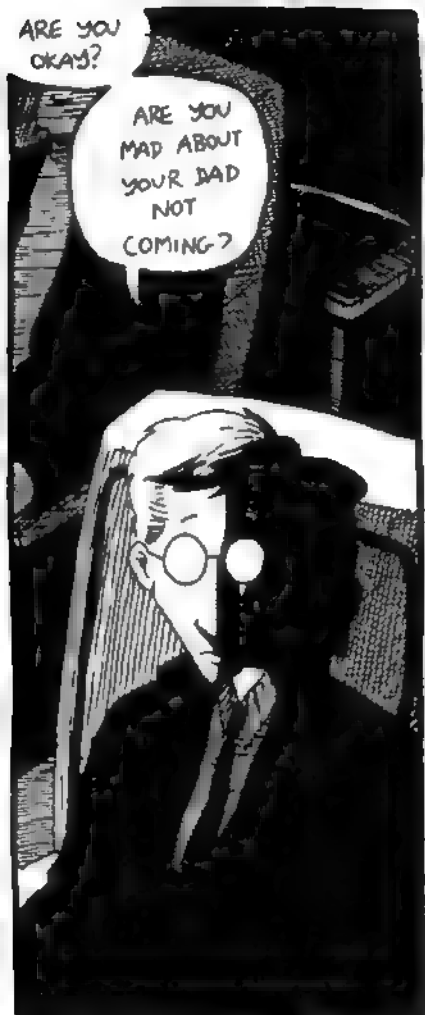


MMM... YOU SA DWH. MY LOVE...

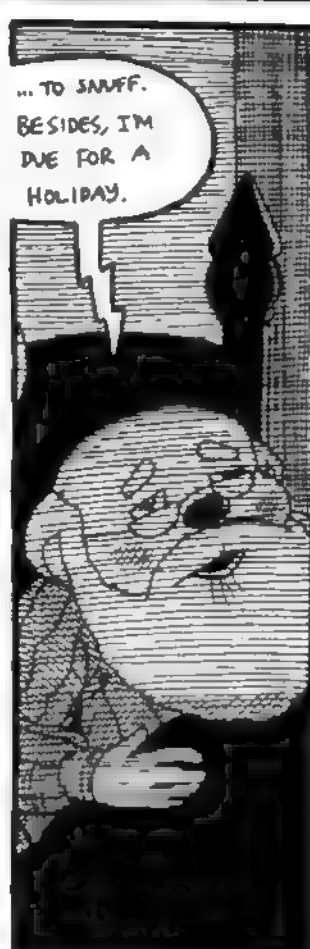
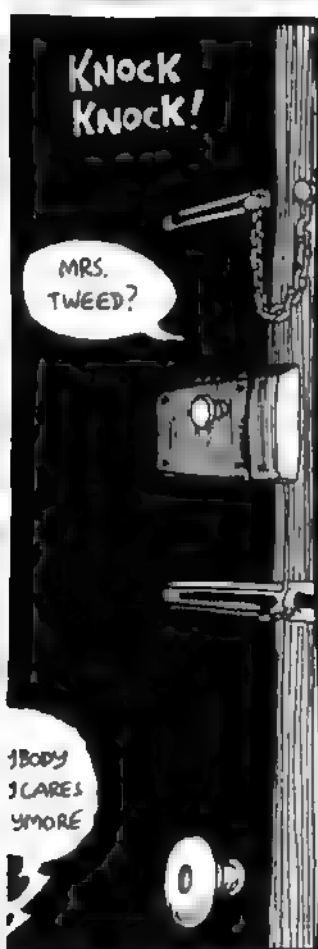
LET'S SEE... ASTA? RAFFLES? MUTLEY? BENJI?

WHAT DID YOU NAME THE OTHER ONE? THE GIRL?

WHAT KIND OF NAT NAMES A DOG "PORKY"?



SORA'S CHRISTMAS



mary & Cookie's X MAS

I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT THIS YOU GUYS! I AM SO FUCKING SORRY!

BUT MY PARENTS ARE COMING HOME ON THURSDAY FOR HANUKAH AND ALL THAT SHIT AND I'M LIKE NOT SUPPOSED TO HAVE ANYONE OVER!



LAST TIME THEY CAME HOME EARLY ONE TIME AND LIKE FUCKING FREAKED OUT CUZ I LET A BUNCH OF SQUATTER GUYS I MET AT THE SKARLET CHYLDE SHOW AT IRVING PLAZA STAY HERE AND THEY FREAKED OUT!

OH MY GOD! THEY-- GOD, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT!



SO I HAVE TO LIKE CLEAN UP AND ALL THAT SHIT BEFORE THEY GET HOME AND GO APE-SHIT!

I'M REALLY SORRY!

HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT? CALL ME IN LIKE A WEEK AND IF THEY'RE GONE YOU CAN CRASH HERE AGAIN, OKAY?

I'M REALLY SORRY, YOU GUYS!



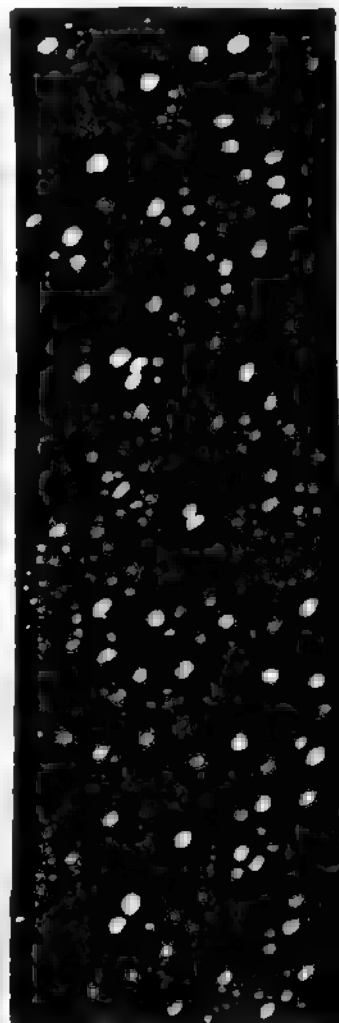
IT'S OKAY, NIGHT.

YEAH, THANKS, NIGHT.



WELL...

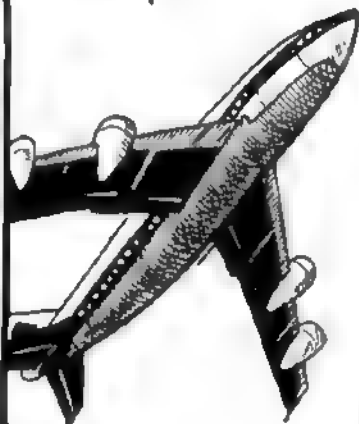
NOW WHAT?



I GUESS THIS
WHOLE THING BEGAN
ON THE PLANE.



WHAT? I JUST
WOULDN'T WANT TO
LIE TO THEM! IS
THAT SO WRONG?



OH COME ON!
YOUR PARENTS TOLD
YOU SANTA WAS
REAL. WASN'T
IT FUN?

YEAH, BUT
I JUST WOULD
FEEL WEIRD ABOUT
IT. TO LIE--



YEAH, BUT IT'S A FUN
LIE! AND IT'S PART
OF THE CULTURE.

HAHA, I REMEMBER
EVERY CHRISTMAS, MY
GRANDFATHER WOULD
DRESS UP AS SANTA
CLAUS AND HAND
OUT OUR
PRESENTS.



IT WAS SO MUCH FUN.
IT'S SO OBVIOUS THAT IT WAS
MY GRANDFATHER, NOW, BUT
AT THE TIME...

I REALLY
BELIEVED!



SIGH! DON'T GET ME
WRONG, I HAVE A BUNCH
OF HAPPY CHRISTMAS
STORIES TOO, BUT I
CAN'T RECONCILE THAT
WITH DELIBERATELY
LYING TO OUR KIDS.





OOH! JANE!
IT'S SO GREAT TO
SEE YOU GUYS
AGAIN!

HOW WAS
YOUR FLIGHT?
OKAY?

HAHA!
YEAH!

MY LEGS
FELL ASLEEP
BUT THE REST
OF ME
WOULDN'T.

THOSE SEATS
WERE DESIGNED
FOR ANOREXIC
DWARVES!

JANE & STEPHEN'S Christmas



HA! YOU
DON'T HAVE TO
TELL ME!

RICHIE,
HOW DO WE GET
OUT OF HERE?

UH...
THIS
WAY!



HOW IS
EVERYONE?
ARE WE THE
LAST ONES TO
GET HERE?

AS
ALWAYS.



ACTUALLY JOYCE JUST
GOT IN WITH THE KIDS
THIS MORNING.

OH? WAS OL'
RACCOON EYES
HIS USUAL
CHARMING
SELF?

WHAT?!
MOM DIDN'T
TELL YOU?

ONE OF THE COMPLICATIONS OF A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP IS WHAT TO DO ABOUT HOLIDAYS. VISIT YOUR PARENTS? VISIT HER PARENTS? INVITE THEM ALL TO OUR PLACE?

AS AGREED IN THE GREAT COMPROMISE OF 1993, THIS YEAR JANE AND I FLEW TO OHIO.



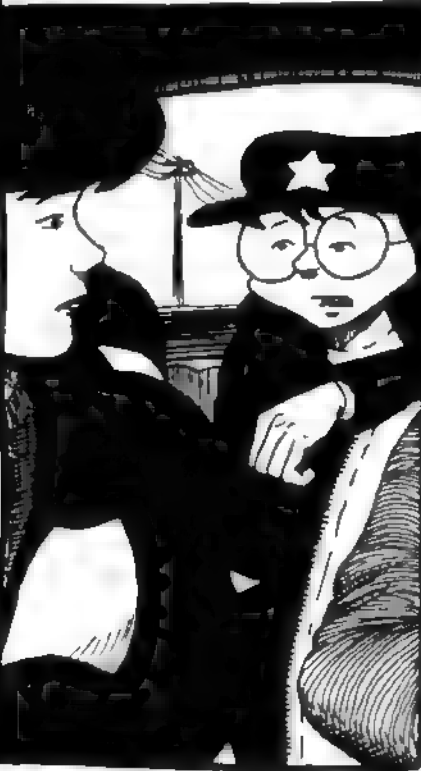
IT'S ALWAYS STRANGE WATCHING SOMEONE YOU'RE INTIMATE WITH AROUND THEIR RELATIVES.



I SEE A SIDE OF JANE I DON'T NORMALLY SEE. I CAN'T PIN-POINT HOW, EXACTLY, SHE ACTS DIFFERENTLY. IT'S JUST THIS SORT OF SUBTLE SHIFT FROM JANE - MY-GIRLFRIEND TO JANE - SOMEONE'S-LITTLE-SISTER OR YOUNGEST-DAUGHTER.



AS AN ONLY CHILD OF A DIVORCE WHO GREW UP IN MANHATTAN, MY EXPERIENCES ARE ABOUT AS DIFFERENT FROM JANE'S AS YOU CAN GET. SHE HAS FOUR SISTERS AND HER PARENTS HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR FORTY-TWO YEARS.



TO ENTERTAIN MYSELF, I ALSO LOOK AT THESE TRIPS AS AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXPEDITION. WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO GROW UP IN THE SUBURBAN MID-WEST?



JANE SAID SHE HATED IT. SHE LEFT THE FIRST CHANCE SHE HAD.

SHE STILL CARES ABOUT HER FAMILY, THOUGH.

I THINK MOST OF THEM ARE OKAY. BUT I'M STILL LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING HOME.

THREE DAYS TO GO...



BELIEVE ME,
JOYCE, YOU'RE
BETTER OFF WITH-
OUT HIM.

HE'S SCUM. AND
THIS LITTLE HAT-
CHECK GIRL OR
WHATEVER SHE
IS?

SHE'S SCUM,
TOO. THEY'RE
BOTH SCUM.
OKAY?

:SNIFF: I KNOW...
BUT THAT DOESN'T
MAKE IT ANY
EASIER.

HOW'S COURTNEY
HANDLING IT?

WE HAVEN'T...
SHE DOESN'T
KNOW YET
:SNIFF:

GREG'S IN HOUSTON
ON BUSINESS, SO WE
USED IT AS AN EXCUSE.

"IN HOUSTON ON
BUSINESS?" ON
CHRISTMAS?

I THINK HE JUST KNOWS
THAT IF HE DARED SHOW HIS
RACCOON-EYED FACE IN
THIS HOUSE WE'D RIP HIS
BALLS OFF!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

POOR COURTNEY...
SHE'S SUCH A
SWEET KID.

UH, ANY
OF THOSE
CHRISTMAS
COOKIES
LEFT?

JANE'S FAMILY ALWAYS REMINDS ME OF A BEEHIVE-- THE WOMEN RUN THE SHOW. JANE'S MOM WOULD BE THE QUEEN, BUT NEXT IN LINE IS KIM, SECOND OLDEST DAUGHTER.

KIM'S ALSO THE MOTHER OF BROOKLYN, THE SPOILED BRAT HOLLERING IN THE NEXT ROOM.



I'VE NOTICED THAT OLDEST KIDS IN FAMILIES TEND TO BE THE NEUROTIC ONES. MAYBE BECAUSE THE PARENTS HAVE TO USE THEM AS A SORT OF "ROUGH DRAFT" FOR THEIR PARENTING SKILLS.

POOR JOYCE'S MARRIAGE HAD BEEN LOSING STEAM FOR A WHILE AND NOW, ONLY A YEAR AFTER SHE HAD "LITTLE JO," HER HUSBAND IS FLYING THE COOP.



LITTLE JO IS NAMED IN HONOR OF JOSIE, THE MIDDLE PEKAR -- NOW ANDERS-- SISTER. I'VE ALWAYS LIKED HER. SHE HAS A... DISARMING QUALITY; REALLY DOWN-TO-EARTH AND APPROACHABLE.

(ACTUALLY, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A SORT OF CRUSH ON HER BUT DON'T TELL JANE--IT'S NOT IMPORTANT.)



JANE IS THE CLOSEST WITH GERTIE, I GUESS BECAUSE THEY'RE THE CLOSEST IN AGE. I THINK SHE'S THE ONLY ONE JANE TOLD ABOUT MY FUMBLED PROPOSAL LAST SUMMER.

SHE'S BRIGHT ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WONDER WHAT SHE SEES IN THAT GOOFY HUSBAND...



OUT OF ALL THE HUSBANDS, THE ONLY ONE I REALLY LIKE IS ANDREW, JOSIE'S GUY.

HE'S THE MANAGER OF A RECORD STORE IN CHICAGO, BUT HE'S ALSO A CIVIL WAR BUFF, SO WE CAN REALLY GET INTO IT.

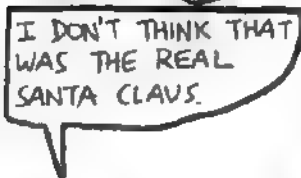


BLAH BLAH, BULL RUN, BLAH BLAH, BOSTON CORBETT, RAH BLAH...

YADDA YADDA SHILON, YADA YADDA THE "MONITOR" BLAH YADDA!

BUT WHEN IT COMES TO HISTORY, HOWEVER, NO ONE CAN COMPARE TO PROFESSOR HERBERT JOSEPH PEKAR, PHD, CHAIR OF THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY AND FATHER OF JANE.





I REALLY LIKE AND ADMIRE PROFESSOR PEKAR-- I EVEN LIKE CALLING HIM THAT, AS IF HE'S A CHARACTER FROM "CLUE". HE AND HIS WIFE (WHO'S ALSO A TEACHER) ARE THE ONLY PARENTS I'VE MET WHO REALLY SEEM TO HAVE IT TOGETHER.



IT SOUNDS TERRIBLE, BUT I WISH MY OWN FATHER WAS MORE LIKE HIM.

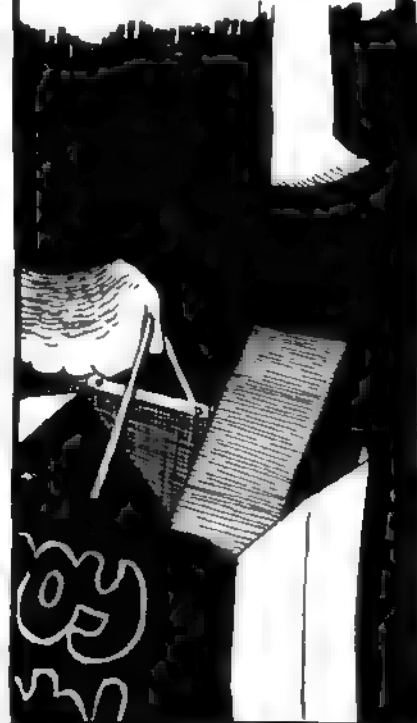
THESE ARE THE LAST OF THE PRESENTS FOR THE GRAND KIDS.

WILL YOU HELP ME BRING THEM IN TO THE CARPORT?



MY OWN PARENTS JUST SEEM SO... DULL. IF THEY EVER HAD ANY INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY, ANY INTEREST IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN TELEVISION OR FOOTBALL SCORES, IT WAS DEAD LONG BEFORE I CAME AROUND.

BUT THE PEKARS... THEY'RE SO VITAL, PASSIONATE.



LOOK AT THE PROFESSOR. HE JUST TURNED SEVENTY, YET HE'S AS CURIOUS ABOUT THE WORLD AS ANYONE I KNOW.



JUST PUT THEM OVER THERE BY THE MOWER.

DID YOU READ MCPHERSON'S BOOK ABOUT THE SOUTH DECIDING TO ARM THE SLAVES? HE REALLY--

STEPHEN.



I'M SORRY, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP.







UH, WHAT

I'M ALMOST
AFRAID TO ASK,
BUT WHAT IS
THIS?



IT'S THE COSTUME MY
FATHER WORE WHEN HE
WOULD PRETEND TO BE
SANTA CLAUS FOR THE
GIRLS... WHEN THEY WERE
SMALL...

THE COSTUME I WORE
WHEN I DID IT FOR DWIGHT
AND COURTNEY AND BROOK
AND NOW LITTLE JO.



THE COSTUME
YOU ARE GOING
TO WEAR
TONIGHT.



WHAT?! ME?
BUT--HAYA!
I--

I'M GETTING
TOO OLD FOR
THIS SORT
OF THING.

IF I HAD MY
WAY, THOUGH, I'D
NEVER GIVE IT
UP.

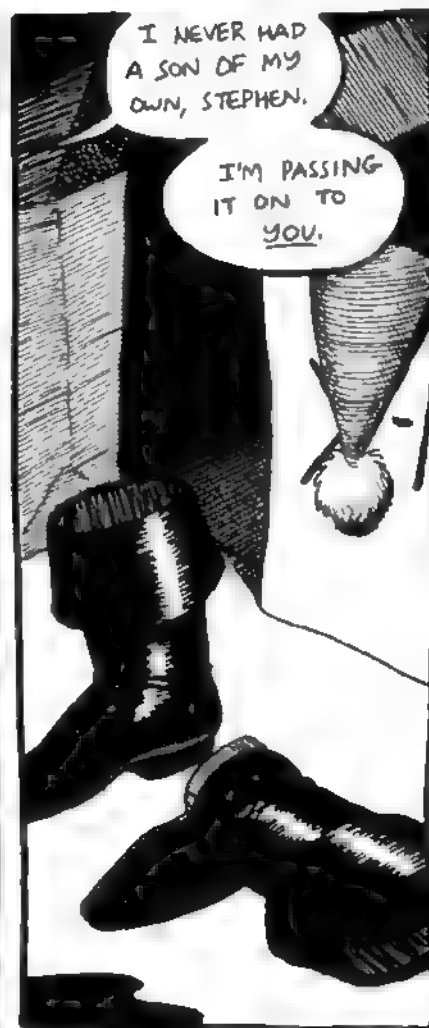


BUT.. I'M SURE RICHIE OR
CHUCK --OR ANDREW! HE'D
BE PERFECT! YOU--

HAHA!

I UNDERSTAND
EXACTLY HOW YOU
FEEL. WHEN MY OWN
FATHER ASKED ME
TO DO IT, I THOUGHT
IT WAS FOOLISH...
EMBARRASSING.

BUT I
WAS
WRONG.



I NEVER HAD
A SON OF MY
OWN, STEPHEN.

I'M PASSING
IT ON TO
YOU.



I GIVE THREE DRAMATIC THUMPS AT THE FRONT DOOR. THEN I WAIT, HOLDING A LAUNDRY BAG FULL OF PLASTIC TOYS MADE BY GIRLS IN THE FAR EAST FOR PENNIES.

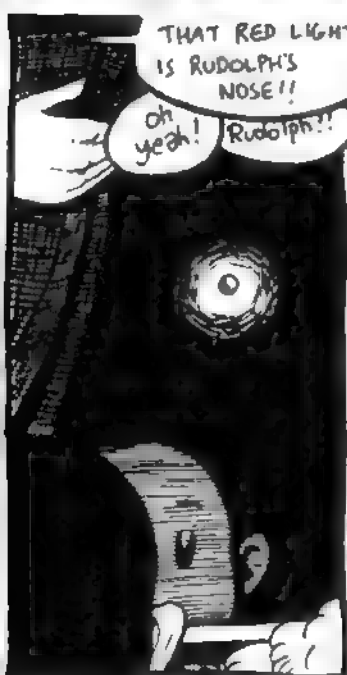


AS I'M WAITING, A VAN GOES BY AND HONKS ITS HORN AS IT PASSES. WHETHER IT'S IN APPRECIATION OR THEY THINK I'M THE PROFESSOR--OR A BURGLAR--I'LL NEVER KNOW



I THINK ABOUT THE KIDS AND WHAT I WILL SAY AND DO TO TRICK THEM INTO BELIEVING IN SANTA. I FEEL ANXIOUS-- EMBARRASSMENT? FEAR THAT THEY WON'T BUY IT?





SUDDENLY, I AM
SANTA CLAUS. I'M
NOT A HISTORY TEACHER,
I'M NOT ANYONES
BOYFRIEND OR
ALMOST SON-IN-LAW.

I'M FATHER
CHRISTMAS.

DWIGHT AND BROOKLYN LOOK AT
ME AS IF I'M GOD INCARNATE.
AS AN ADULT YOU DON'T REALIZE
THAT KIDS BELIEVE IN SANTA,
REALLY BELIEVE, THE SAME WAY
WE BELIEVE IN CARS OR IN
BUILDINGS -- NO QUESTION.

MAGIC IS REAL
TO THEM!

I GLANCE OVER AT PROFESSOR
PEKAR AND REALIZE HES
DRAFTED ME INTO A BROTHER-
HOOD WORDS CANNOT EXPLAIN.
I UNDERSTAND, NOW, WHY HE
DID IT AND WHY IT MUSTVE
BEEN PAINFUL FOR HIM TO
GIVE IT UP.

I'M GRATEFUL
TO DO IT FOR
ONE YEAR, AT
LEAST...

THEN I LOOK AT
COURTNEY AND IT'S
LIKE A SLEDGE-
HAMMER TO MY
CHEST...

SHE DOESN'T
BELIEVE
ANY MORE.

IT'S NOT MY PERFORMANCE--
BECAUSE I'M NOT PERFORMING,
I AM SANTA CLAUS -- BUT FOR
THE FIRST TIME SHE KNOWS
THE TRUTH. I FEEL A PANG
OF SADNESS... SOMETHING
PRECIOUS AND RARE IS
GONE FOREVER.

HOHO! YOU'RE WELCOME, BROOKLYN!

OH! WHAT HAVE WE HERE? WHY, IT'S FOR DWIGHT!

YOU KNOW THE RULE ONE TONIGHT, THE REST YOU CAN GET TOMORROW.

COOL! MOM CAN I OPEN IT NOW?! PLEEEEEASE!

WOW! THE BRAIN™ WITH SKULL-KRUSHER™ GRIP! COOL!!

MOMMY A TAWKIN SIGGY!

GOOD BOYS AND GIRLS ALWAYS DO AS THEY'RE TOLD, HAHHA!

GOD! OUR TOYS WEREN'T HALF AS GOOD AS THESE TOYS!

I KNOW \$18.99 FOR A SET OF PLASTIC!

GOOD BYE, COURTNEY! BYE BROOKLYN! GOOD BYE, DWIGHT! SEE YOU NEXT CHRISTMAS!

BYE SANTA!

GOOD BYE, SANTA!

"SOME PEOPLE ARE BORN SANTA CLAUS, SOME WORK ALL THEIR LIVES TO BECOME SANTA CLAUS AND SOME HAVE SANTA CLAUS THRUST UPON THEM."

PROFESSOR PEKAR'S WORDS.



IN TWO MONTHS, FRED, JOSIE AND ANDREW'S SON WILL BE BORN. HELL GROW UP TO TEACH BAND AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN MUNSTER, INDIANA.

IN THIRTY-TWO YEARS FRED DONS THE SUIT I WORE TONIGHT AND BECOMES SANTA CLAUS FOR A NEW GENERATION... FOR HIS KIDS AND DWIGHT'S KID AND LIL' JO'S KID...



IN FIVE MONTHS, JOYCE WILL OFFICIALLY DIVORCE GREG.

COURTNEY IS HIT HARDEST BY THE BREAK UP. SHE'LL HAVE AN ESPECIALLY ROUGH ADOLESCENCE. MARRIED BY AN EATING DISORDER AND TWO SUICIDE ATTEMPTS. SHE OVERCOMES IT, THOUGH, AND WILL GO ON TO BE A FAMOUS AUTHOR.

AS AN OLD MAN, I'LL SKIM THROUGH HER MEMOIRS AND FIND NO MENTION OF SANTA CLAUS.

AM I RELIEVED OR SAD?



IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THE PROFESSOR WILL HAVE TO RETIRE FROM TEACHING AS HIS BODY IS RAVAGED BY CANCER.

HELL BEAT IT THE FIRST TIME, BUT SUCCEMB AT THE AGE OF EIGHTY FOUR. WHILE HIS WIFE SITS IN A ROCKER READING TO HIM, HELL DIE PEACEFULLY.



SO... WILL I LIE TO MY KIDS? WILL I TELL THEM THAT SANTA CLAUS IS REAL? THAT ONCE A YEAR REINDEER CAN FLY AND IF YOU'RE GOOD AT LEAST SANTA WILL KNOW?



YES

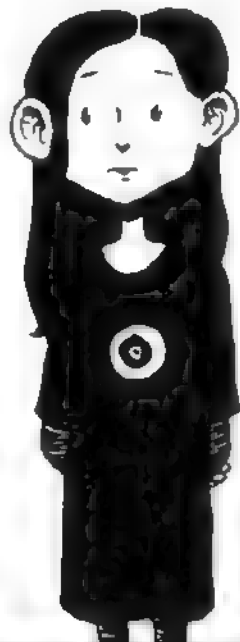
HAVE I EVER
HAD AN EROTIC DREAM
ABOUT SANDY
DUNCAN?



HAVE I
EVER GONE TO A
NUDE BEACH?



WILL I
SHOW UP AGAIN
BEFORE THE END
OF THIS BOOK?



HAVE I
EVER GONE TO
A SHRINK?



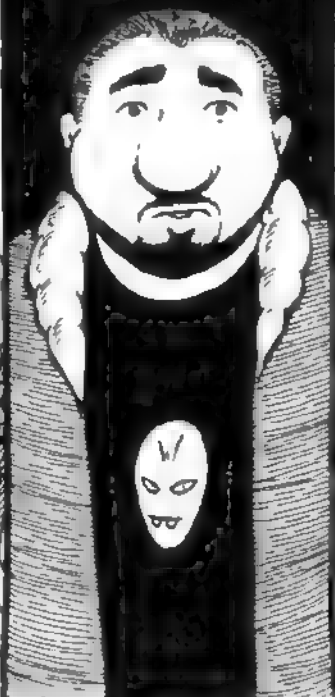
DID I
EVER TRY
L.S.D.?

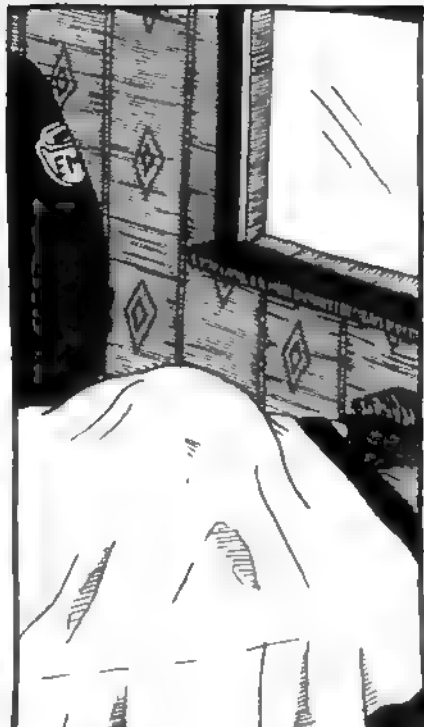


DO I THINK COMICS
ARE FOR KIDS--OR
AT LEAST EMOTIONALLY
RETARDED ADULTS?



WILL I
EVER FIND
TRUE LOVE?





A ROCK IN A POND





I'M ON LIKE, MY WAY HOME FROM THE BANK AND EVERY-
THING, RIGHT? BUT IT'S NOT REALLY MY NEIGHBORHOOD
OR ANYTHING. I'M LIKE IN CALIFORNIA OR HAWAII OR
SOMEPLACE.



SUDDENLY, THIS GIRL COMES UP TO ME-- SHE LOOKS
LIKE THAT CASHIER I'M IN LOVE WITH AT THE KEY FOOD
NEAR MY HOUSE-- AND SHE'S ALL FLUSTERED AND
EXCITED ABOUT MEETING ME!



SHE'S LIKE CONGRATULATING ME ON WINNING ALL OF
THOSE AWARDS FOR MY COMICS AND EVERYTHING AND
SHE'S SEEN MY T.V. SHOW AND WANTS TO KNOW
WHAT TYRA BANKS AND ANNA NICOLE SMITH ARE REALLY
LIKE AND ALL THAT...



THE WHOLE TIME THIS GOING ON I FEEL SOMETHING,
LIKE, TUGGING AT MY PANTS

YEAH, I BET
YOU DID!

YEAH,
RIGHT, SO I LOOK DOWN
TO SEE WHAT IS AND



EDDIE... EDDIE!
CAN YOU SPARE ME
THIRTY PIECES
OF SILVER?

Scough

SIGGLY NEEDS
A NOSE JOB!



AND THAT WAS
IT: I WOKE UP IN
A COLD SWEAT!

WOW, WHAT DO
YOU THINK IT
MEANS?

I FELT BAD
ABOUT STEALING
THE CAMERA. I
HADN'T EVEN
USED IT YET
I KNOW.





"JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAY CRUNCH, CADBURY FILMS RELEASED THE HOME VIDEO VERSION OF 'NIGHTSTALKER II', THE SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER WHICH GROSSED AN EYE POPPING \$450

MILLION AT THE ...



GOD ALL-MIGHTY FOR CHRIST'S SAKE JESUS.

SHE WASN'T--

YES, IF YOU COULD TELL PAULIE THAT I SAID "NO DICE"...

VELASQUEZ. Q-U-E-Z.

YUP.



THANKS! YEAH, HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU, TOO.

I KNOW! I KNOW! ISN'T IT GREAT! THIS IS LIKE THE BIG TIME!

A REAL MAGAZINE!



HOLY FUCKING MOSES AT THE CROSSROADS...

J.C. IS GOING TO BE PISSED FUCKING OFF!



YEAH, COME ON, YOU CAN READ THE WHOLE THING AT LUNCH.

LUNCH?



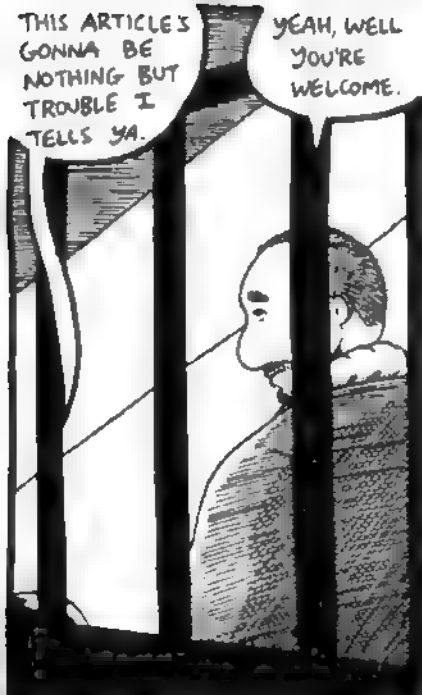
YEAH, TO SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION YOU'RE BUYING ME LUNCH.

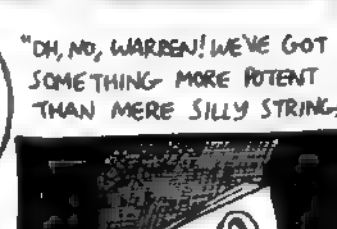
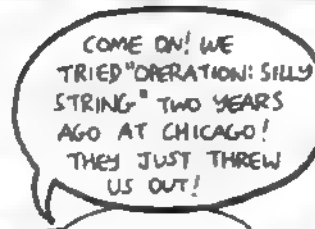
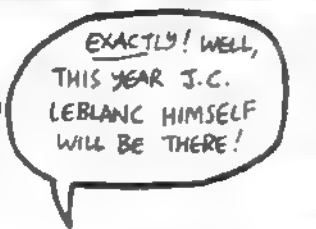
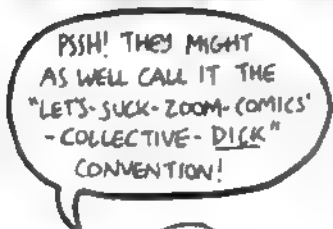
SO PUT YOUR HAIR ON AND LET'S GO!

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT!

JEEZ! A GUY GETS YOUR NAME IN THE PAPER AND SUDDENLY YOUR HIS RICH UNCLE GOD DAMNED PENNY BAGS BUYING HIM FOOD!







...VIVRON EXPECTED TO WIN STUDENT TREASURY, UN, STUDENT TREASURER ONCE AGAIN.



LIZ PARBONI,
UNIVERSITY NEWS.

...TOWN COUNCIL HAD NO COMMENT AT PRESS TIME.



LIZ PARBONI,
CHANNEL 54 NEWS
IN ORANGE COUNTY.

...FUN. BUT ONE THING IS CLEAR: WE ALL LOVE A PARADE!



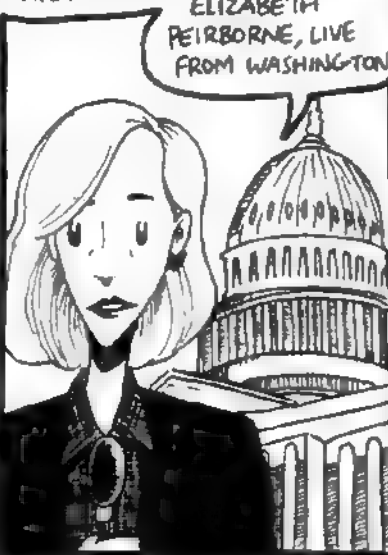
LIZ PEIRBORNE,
NEW YORK NEWS, IN
MIDTOWN.

...THE BEAMING STAR AS HE TOOK HOME HIS THIRD OSCAR.



ELIZABETH PEIRBORNE,
NATIONAL NEWS, IN
HOLLYWOOD.

...SENATOR RAY SAID A TEARFUL FAREWELL AS HE LEFT HIS OFFICE FOR THE LAST AND FINAL TIME.



ELIZABETH
PEIRBORNE, LIVE
FROM WASHINGTON.

...WITH THE TERRORISTS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.



ELIZABETH PEIRBORNE-
SMITH, AT THE WHITE
HOUSE.

...ME LATER TONIGHT FOR MY EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT.



ELIZABETH PEIRBORNE-
SMITH, IN WASHINGTON.

...VOWS "THE KILLER WILL BE FOUND." STRONG WORDS...FROM A STRONG MAN.

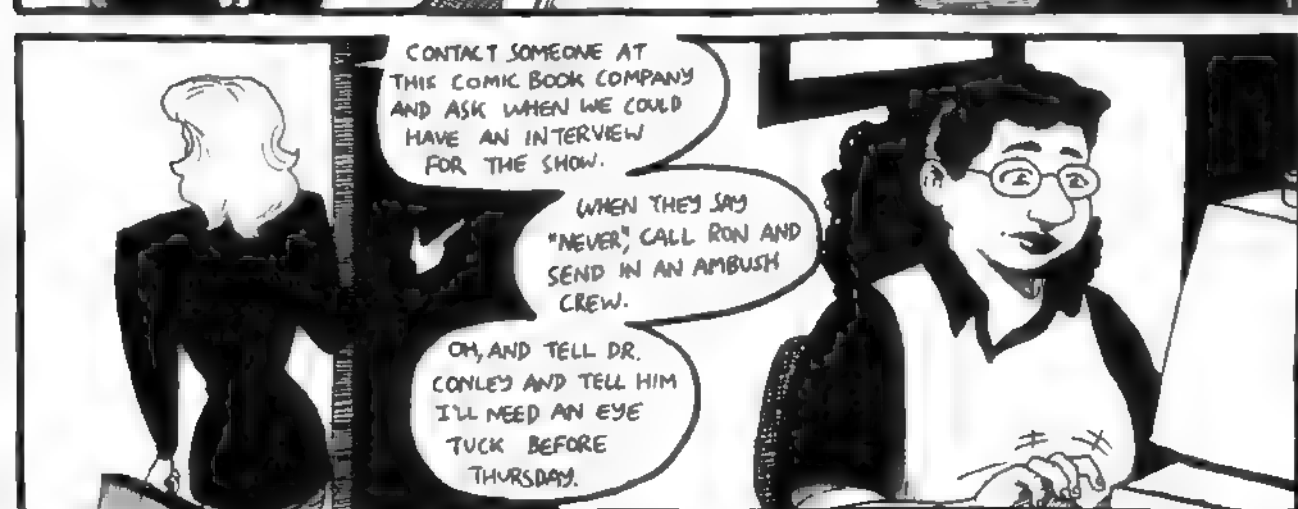
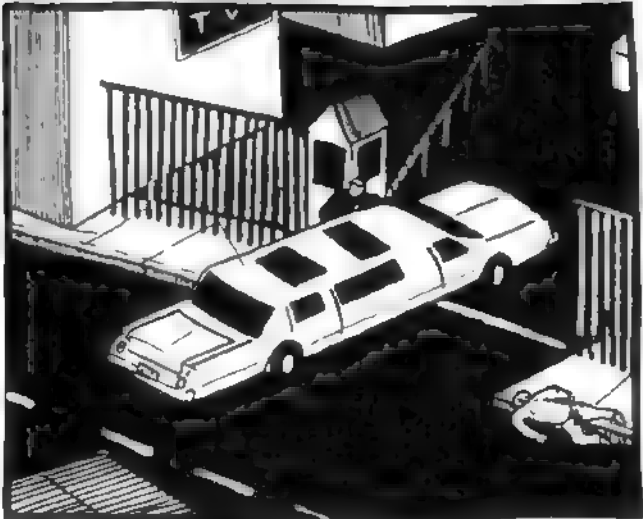


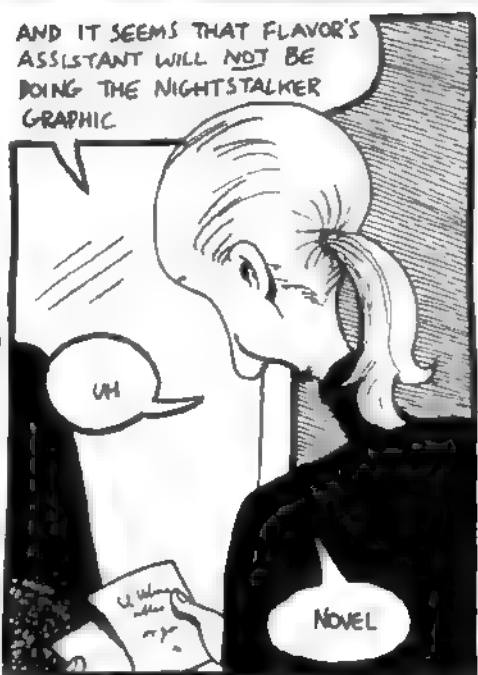
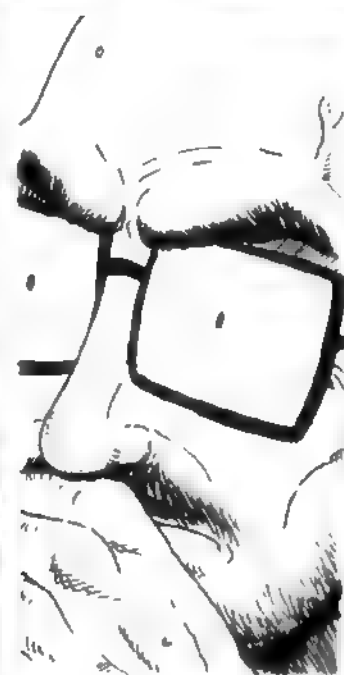
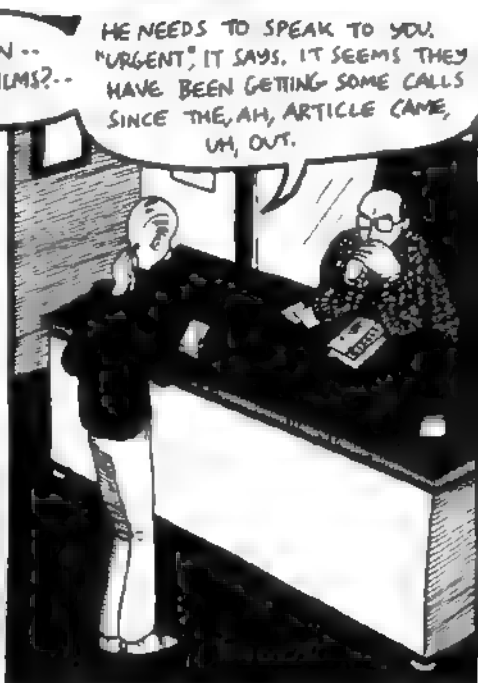
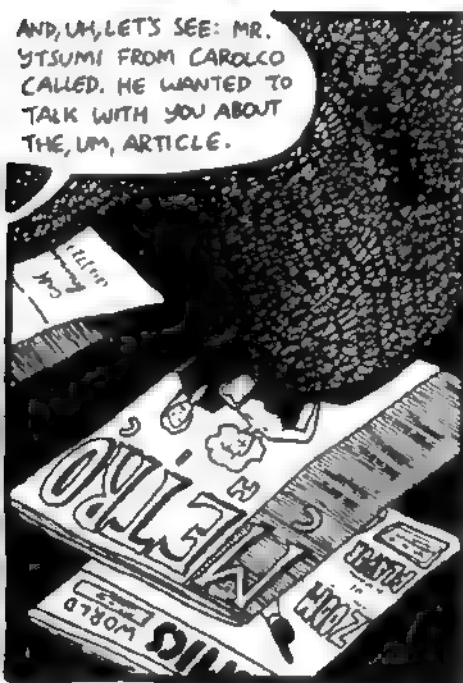
ELIZABETH PEIRBORNE,
CHICAGO NEWS AT 10.

...CLAIMED. BUT OUR HIDDEN CAMERA REVEALED A TALENT A BIT... KINKIER.



I'M ELIZABETH
PEIRBORNE AND THIS...
IS "INSIDE SCOOP!"







HEY...

WHAT'S
WRONG?

HMMM?



WHAT? OH, NOTHING'S
WRONG. I JUST--

UM, WOULD IT BE
OKAY WITH YOU IF...
WE DIDN'T HAVE
SEX TONIGHT?

I DON'T
KNOW, I'M JUST
NOT IN THE
MOOD, OR--

WHAT'S THE MATTER? ARE
YOU MAD AT ME OR
SOMETHING? WHAT DID--



NO, NO, NO. IT DOESN'T HAVE
ANYTHING TO DO WITH
YOU. I'M JUST--

SIGH:
I DON'T
KNOW.

WELL, IF YOU
CHANGE YOUR
MIND, DO LET
ME KNOW.

DID YOU ASK JANE
ABOUT BRINGING
FIBO HOME YET?
IT'S BEEN ALMOST
A MONTH.

SORRY. I
KEEP
FORGETTING.

ONE OF MY STUPID NEIGHBORS
COMPLAINED TO ME ABOUT ALL
THE BARKING AGAIN. WHAT
DOES SHE WANT ME TO DO?





OH! HEY, DID YOU EVER HEAR FROM THAT BEATLES FAN MAGAZINE IN ENGLAND? ABOUT PUBLISHING YOUR STORY?

AHHH, THOSE DUMB FUCKS. DON'T LET IT DISCOURAGE YOU, SWEETIE.

YEAH. THEY TURNED IT DOWN. OF COURSE.

DID YOU DO ANY MORE WORK ON THAT STORY YOU WERE DOING? ABOUT THAT WEIRD NEIGHBOR YOU HAD AS A KID?

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU SHOULD DO? SET ASIDE A CERTAIN TIME OF DAY -- LIKE AN HOUR, TWO HOURS -- TO DO NOTHING BUT WRITE.

NO, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO WRITE FOR AWHILE.

UH-HUH.

OR EVEN BETTER: FORCE YOURSELF TO WRITE AT LEAST FOUR OR FIVE PAGES A DAY, RAIN OR SHINE, NO MATTER WHAT. ONE OF MY OLD TEACHERS SAID THAT.

I THINK THE PROBLEM WITH MOST ASPIRING WRITERS IS THAT THEY SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ASPIRING AND NOT ENOUGH TIME WRITING!

YEAH. I SHOULD.

SOME AUTHOR SAID THAT THE WAY TO BE A GREAT WRITER IS TO WRITE 10,000 PAGES. BY PAGE 10,001, YOU'RE A GOOD WRITER.

MMM.

ACTUALLY, I FEEL PRETTY TIRED. WOULD YOU MIND SHUTTING OFF THE LIGHT AND WE GO TO SLEEP?

OKAY

I GUESS NOT.

GOOD NIGHT.

NIGHT.



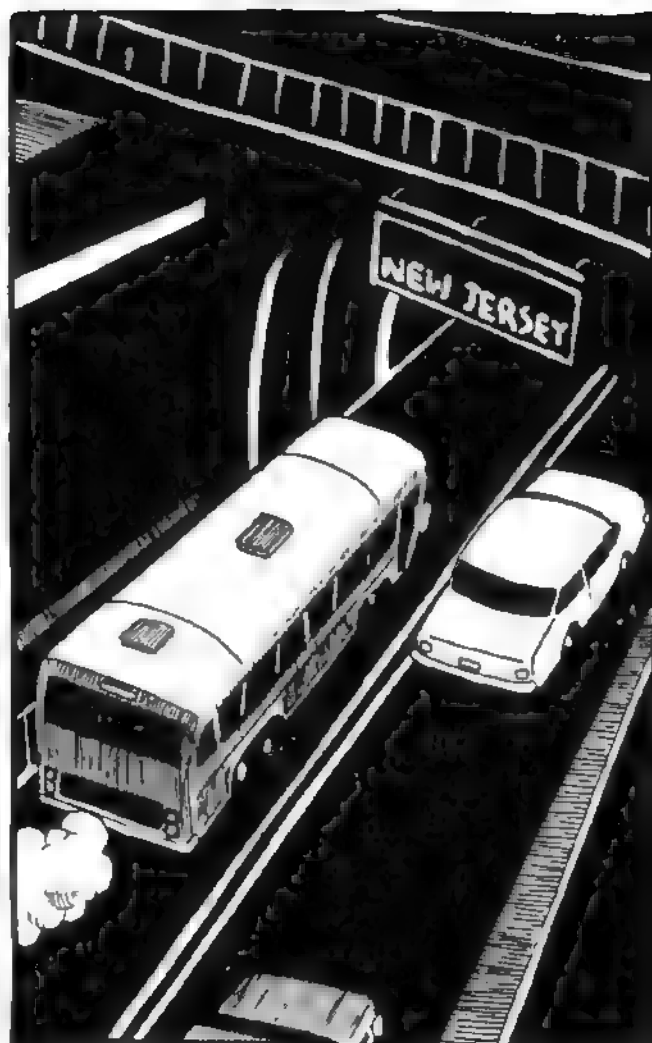


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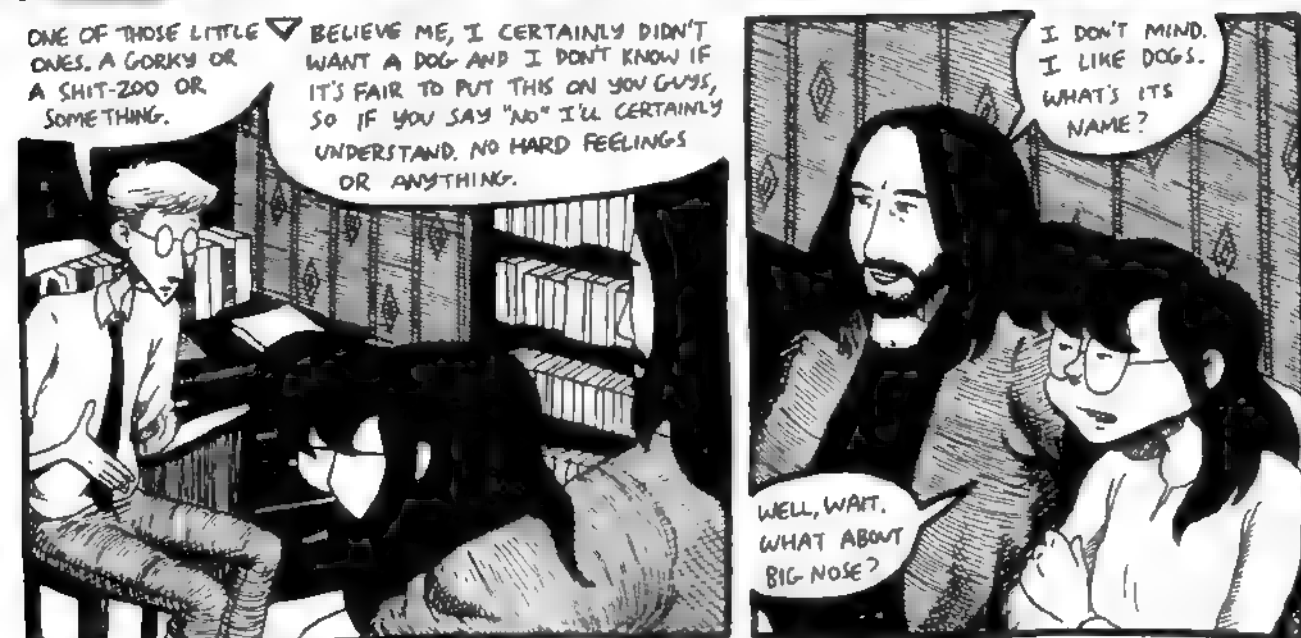




HOUSE OF TWEED











WHAT
WILL YOUR
AUTO-
BIOGRAPHY
BE
CALLED?

"ME JANE"



"SHERMAN
DAVIES: A LIFE."



"YES I CAN (IF
FRANK SINATRA SAYS
IT'S OKAY)"
Heh
Heh



"KING OF
SELF ABUSE."



"HOW I LEARNED TO
STOP WORRYING AND
HATE EVERYBODY'S
STUPID GOD DAMNED
GUTS"



"STRANGE BREW:
MY LIFE ON THE ROAD
WITH RICK MORANIS."



WHO THE HELL WOULD
WANT TO READ MY
AUTO-BIOGRAPHY?

JUST PLAY
ALONG

OKAY, OKAY,
UHH... "CREATOR! THE
HARD PATH TO GLORY
FOR THE FATHER OF
THE NIGHTSTALKER."





STAGE ONE: OPENING GAMBIT!!





JES! AND WE DON'T JUST MEAN
YOUR BATTLE OVER THE NIGHT-
STALKER! WHY, HAVE YOU READ
THE LATEST ISSUE OF "A.T.A.C."
FORCE?" NINJA'S NEW COSTUME
IS ATROCIOUS!



AMERICAN TEAM AGAINST CRIME - E!

THE WAY
IT MAKES HER

UH...



I'M SORRY.

I'LL--

SORRY.



ANYWAY, SO WE
WERE HOPING THAT
THIS YEAR WE COULD
GET YOU TO COME
TO GRAND SEQUON.



ME? WHAT
FOR?

WHAT WE WANT TO DO
IS HAVE YOU SHOW UP AND
THE "COMICS WORLD" W

BZZZZ!



HILDY! WHAT THE DEVIL
ARE YOU DOING UP HERE?
WE TOLD YOU TO STAY
WITH THE CAR!

YOU GO STAY
WITH THE CAR!
THE HEATER DOESN'T
WORK AND IT'S
FREEZING OUT!



BUT-BUT-BUT! BUT
MY CAR! IT WON'T
LAST FIVE MINUTES IN
THIS CRIME RIDDEN
NEIGHBORHOOD!

IF YOU'RE REALLY WORRIED,
YOU'RE WELCOME TO GO
DOWN AND--



CAN I PLEASE TELL
IRVING OUR SECRET PLAN
WITHOUT ANYMORE FUCKING
INTERRUPTIONS?!?

HARVEY! WOULD
TELL HER TO GO
WITH THE CAR
SHUT UP? I



MR. LEBLANC 'MR. LEBLANC' WHAT DO YOU SAY TO CRITICS WHO SAY ZOOM COMICS IS BUILT ON THE BONES OF A POOR OLD MAN WHO--



I'M SORRY BOYS IF YOU WANT AN INTERVIEW, YOU'LL HAVE TO CALL MY OFFICE DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS I'D BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY OF YOUR QUESTIONS WHEN--



IS IT RIGHT THAT YOU LIVE IN A MILLION DOLLAR HOME IN CONNECTICUT WHILE IRWIN FLAVOR LIVES IN A SQUALID--

I-- I DON'T LIVE IN A--
:SPUTTER:



I SUPPOSE THAT WHERE IRVING FLAVOR LIVES IS HIS OWN CONCERN COME ON, FELLAS, PLEASE. I'M JUST ON MY WAY HOME HERE. COME ON, HUM?



MR. LEBLANC, HOW MUCH MONEY DID NIGHTSTALKER MAKE FOR ZOOM COMICS AND ITS STOCKHOLDERS? HOW MUCH DID YOU, PERSONALLY, EARN FROM IRWIN--



TOMORROW! CALL MARGIE KREDER AND SHE'LL SET SOMETHING UP!

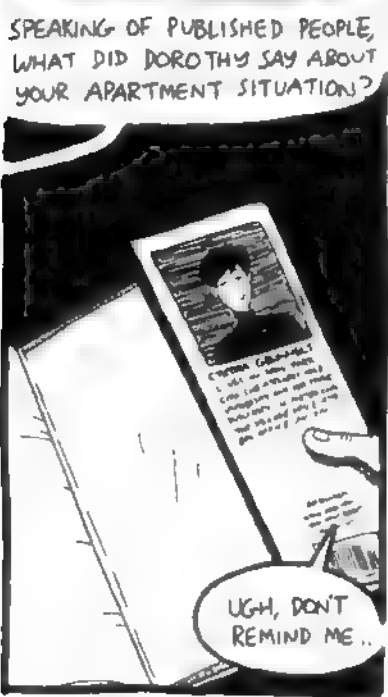
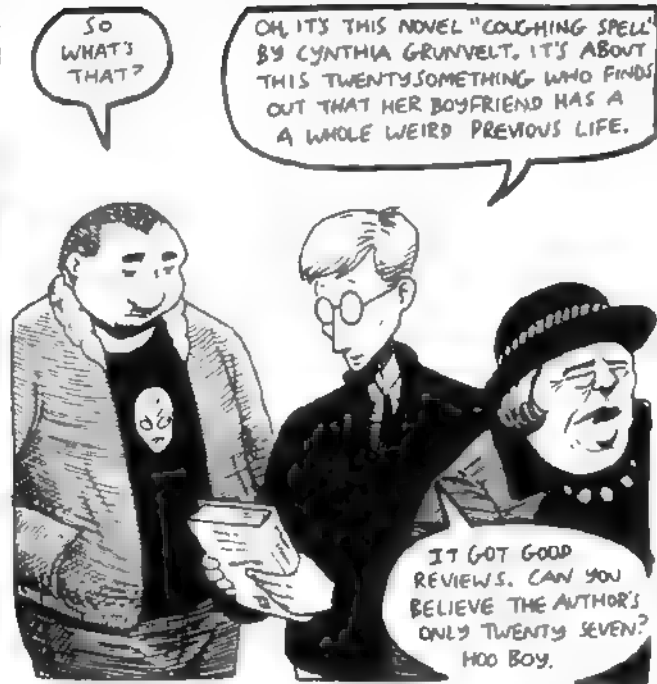
BYE!



STAGE TWO: THE FINAL BATTLE!

IN THE COMPANY OF GUYS





IT IS EASY FOR ME TO SAY
BECAUSE YOU KNOW HOW MANY
TIMES I'VE BEEN KICKED
OUT OF APARTMENTS?

I GIVE UP
HOW MANY
TIMES?



UMMMMM...

BASTARD
AND CLARK



FIVE
TIMES!



I LIVED IN SAN
FRANCISCO FOR LIKE
TWO MONTHS BEFORE
MY LOVABLE ROOMMATES
ASKED ME TO LEAVE.

THERE WAS
TWICE IN BALTIMORE,
RIGHT OUT OF
SCHOOL.

I HAD A
BRIEF STINT IN
CHICAGO UNTIL
MY BUILDING WAS
CONDEMNED.

AND TWO TIMES
IN NEW YORK -- ONCE
BY MY COUSIN AND ONCE
BY YOUR PALS STEPHEN
AND JANE, SO

THAT'S SIX
TIMES! SIX!

AND I'M JUST
TALKING ABOUT
APARTMENTS, NOW, NOT
DORMITORIES OR OTHER
SCHOOL HOUSINGS!

WOW! SIX
TIMES. IS
THAT TRUE?

AH, WHO
THE HELL
KNOWS.

OH, WAIT, I
HAVE THE
SEVENTEEN
CENTS.



SO THEN WHAT
HAPPENED NEXT?

WELL, SOME GUY COMES
OVER AND STARTS HOLLERING
ABOUT DOROTHY NOT HAVING
THE DOGS ON LEASHES.

I GUESS ONE OF
THEM TRIED TO
BITE HIS DUMB
KID OR SOMETHING.



I WAS GLAD
SOMETHING CAME
UP TO CHANGE THE
SUBJECT.



YOU KNOW WHAT MY PROBLEM IS?
MY PROBLEM IS I DON'T MEET
ENOUGH WOMEN.

AMEN,
BROTHER!



NO, REALLY. I
HAVE TWO JOBS: ONE
WITH A CRANKY OLD
GUY,

THE OTHER IS AT A HARDWARE
STORE WITH MY FATHER. I'M
NEVER IN SITUATIONS WHERE I
CAN SOCIALIZE WITH CHIKKS!

AS BAD AS MATTHEW'S MAY
BE, AT LEAST YOU GET TO
MINGLE WITH GIRLS OF THE,
UH, FEMALE PERSUASION.



IT'S A DOUBLE
EDGED SWORD, OLD
CHVM. TEMPTATION
ABOUNDS...

ARE YOU STILL
FIXATED ON THAT
PUERTO RICAN
GIRL?

HER, THAT BLONDE GIRL
WHO'S IN CHARGE OF THE
SCIENCE SECTION, THIS
NEW GIRL AT SPECIAL
ORDERS... I GOT A
MILLION OF 'EM...



HAHA... THE OTHER DAY I'M
AT WORK, RIGHT? AND I'M
HELPING THIS GIRL, SUSAN, PUT
SOME BOOKS AWAY. SO
SHE'S UP ON THIS LADDER...

UH
OH!



SO SHE'S UP ON THIS LADDER,
PUTTING SOME BOOKS UP ON THE
HIGHER SHELF, AND HER SHIRT
SORT OF... RIDES UP. IT DIDN'T
REALLY REVEAL MUCH, JUST
LIKE TWO INCHES OF
HER STOMACH.

NOTHING YOU
COULDN'T SEE A MILLION
GIRLS SHOWING OFF IN THE
SUMMER... BUT THAT CUTE
BELLY BUTTON WILL HAUNT
ME 'TIL MY GRAVE.

HAHA! YEAH, IT'S THAT, I DON'T KNOW, FORBIDDEN-NESS THAT MAKES IT SO GREAT

A FEW YEARS AGO, I WAS TAKING THIS ART CLASS WHERE WE'D SPEND, LIKE SIX HOURS DRAWING FROM A NUDE MODEL.

DURING THE BREAKS, SHE'D WALK AROUND AND LOOK AT EVERYONE'S STUFF.

SHE LIKED MY PICTURES, AND WE STARTED TALKING AND ALL THAT. (SHE MADE IT CLEAR FROM THE START THAT SHE HAD SOME DUMB BOYFRIEND, SO I WAS ABLE TO RELAX).

"ANYHOW, AFTER CLASS WE WOUND UP TAKING THE SAME BUS HOME. IT WAS PRETTY CROWDED..."

YEAH, SO WHAT HE REALLY WANTS TO DO IS PLAY GUITAR, BUT FOR NOW HE'S --

!!!
I TOLD HIM "FOLLOW YOUR DREAM BUT DON'T TELL ME YOU C

YOU JUST SPENT SIX HOURS LOOKING AT ME TOTALLY NAKED BUT YOU STILL WANT TO LOOK DOWN MY SHIRT?!

NOT A
TIST!
AM! I

INTERD,
SONGS.
FELD
ED?
ED?

Uhhhhh...
HehHeh.

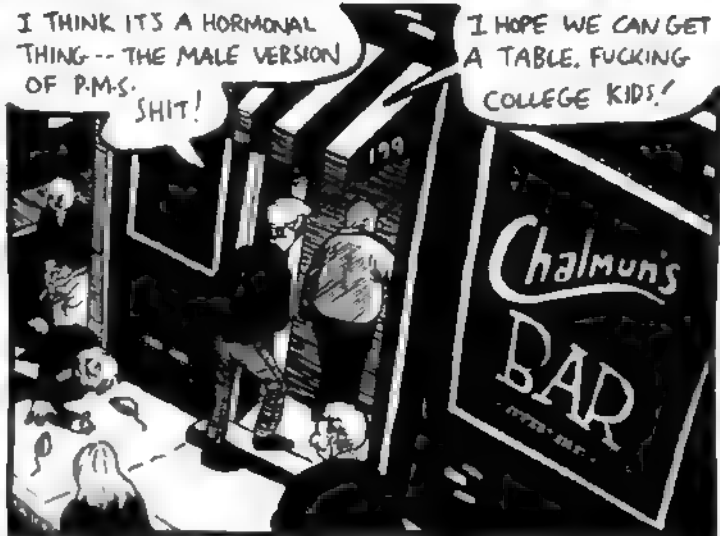
HAHAHA! THAT'S A GREAT STORY! I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE BUSTED YOU LIKE THAT!

BUT SHE WAS RIGHT!
HAHAHA!

I GUESS GUYS JUST CAN'T HELP IT. IF THERE'S CLEAVAGE, YOU JUST HAVE TO... LOOK.

I THINK IT'S A HORMONAL THING -- THE MALE VERSION OF P.M.S.
SHIT!

I HOPE WE CAN GET A TABLE. FUCKING COLLEGE KIDS!



THE FUNNY THING IS, YOU COULD BE MARRIED TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LEGGY SUPERMODEL ON EARTH AND HAVE GREAT SEX WITH HER FIFTEEN TIMES A DAY BUT WHEN YOU WALK DOWN THE STREET, YOUR EYES ARE STILL GOING TO WANDER.



I DON'T KNOW... IF I WAS HAVING SEX FIFTEEN TIMES A DAY I DON'T THINK I COULD WALK DOWN THE STREET.

WHAT ABOUT... OKAY, DO YOU THINK YOUR GIRLFRIEND ACTS THE SAME WAY?

WHEN SHE GOES OUT WITH HER FEMALE FRIENDS DOES SHE PISS AND MOAN ABOUT LUSTING AFTER GUYS?



HMMMM...

JESUS! THE BAIT'S GOT ITS GOOD LANCE! CATCHED IT ON THE TAIL! TOUCHDOWN!!

YOU KNOW, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I DON'T THINK DOROTHY HAS ANY FEMALE FRIENDS.

BUT, YEAH, I'M SURE THEY'RE JUST AS BAD AS WE ARE. WELL, OKAY NOT AS BAD...

HEH HEH. HEY LISTEN, WAS DOROTHY -- CAN I ASK YOU A PERSONAL QUESTION?



UH, OH. JAMES ISN'T EVEN HERE YET AND ALREADY WITH THE PERSONAL QUESTIONS? GO AHEAD AND ASK.







IT JUST MAKES ME SAD TO KNOW I'LL NEVER GET TO HAVE SEX WITH TWO GIRLS AT THE SAME TIME.

WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT? YOU'RE STILL A YOUNG GUY WITH A FEW YEARS LEFT.





DO LESBIANS FIND THE SAME WOMEN ATTRACTIVE THAT MEN FIND ATTRACTIVE?

PERSONALLY, I CAN'T BELIEVE MORE WOMEN AREN'T LESBIANS HAVE YOU LOOKED AT GUYS?

I MEAN, CHECK OUT THESE WINNERS. THEIR WHOLE LIVES REVOLVE AROUND WHICH OVERPAID STEROID ADDLED FREAKS ARE BETTER AT PLAYING CHILDREN'S GAMES

BEER, VIOLENCE AND FARTING. IF I WAS A WOMAN I'D HAVE TO PASS ON THAT ONE.

YEAH. I'M GONNA BE A LESBIAN TOO.

SHIT, YOU GUYS ARE FUCKING PATHETIC!

YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYONE, YOU'RE NOT. JUST CUZ YOU GOT PICKED ON BY THE WRESTLING TEAM IN HIGH SCHOOL YOU'RE MR AND MRS. SENSITIVE SOULS.

BUT YOU KNOW IF YOU COULD'VE SWITCHED PLACES WITH, LIKE, "REFRIGERATOR" PERRY OR SOME ASSHOLE YOU WOULD'VE DONE IT IN SEVEN SECONDS!

SO, WHAT? I SECRETLY YEARN TO BE SOME CRD-MAGNON PITUITARY CASE WITH THE BRAINS OF A DUST BUSTER SO I--

ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT IF SOMEONE OFFERED YOU MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO DO BEER COMMERCIALS, KICK A FOOTBALL AROUND ONCE A WEEK AND SLEEP WITH PILES OF SUPERMODELS, YOU WOULD DO IT.

PLUS IT'S YOUR TURN TO BUY.

AND DON'T DENY IT, CUZ YOU'RE A LYING DOG.



SO THIS GUY WALKS
INTO A BAR AND SITTING
NEXT TO THE BARTENDER
IS THIS GORILLA, RIGHT?

SHE DID
GIVE A NICE
SET OF JOKES

I REALLY LIKED
"THE WISHBONES" BETTER.
IT WAS LIKE AN AMERICAN
"HIGH FIDELITY!"

OH, I'M
NOT SURE
I HATE
WEAKNESS
GIRLS WITH
GLASSES

WHENEVER I'D
SEE HER I'D GET
THAT ACHEY
FEELING IN
MY CHEST.

HE YE
OUT TO
"HEY! MISTER!
YOU FORGOT
PICKLE!"

THAT GORILLA FOR?
TO THE BARTENDER SAYS
"WATCH." HE PICKS UP A
BAT AND STARTS, LIKE,
WHACKING THE
GORILLA.

I DON'T KNOW
WHAT I'M GONNA
DO ABOUT THIS APARTMENT

SO THIS STUPID
CUSTOMER ASKS ME
IF I WORK HERE..

OH, OF
COURSE!

MAN! LOOK AT
HER! :Sigh: I
REALLY LOVE
SCHOOL
GIRLS

WHAT ABOUT
YOU, ED? YOU EVER
GONNA MOVE OUT?

JAMES, HAVE
YOU EVER HAD SEX
WITH A BLA...

DONKEYLLA GOES
TO THE BAR AND
MEETS THE BARTENDER
A BLOW JOB.

YEAH, I
WISH!
WERE
DOOMED.

HABA!
I KNOW, "N
BANANA

I DON'T
... I KIND OF LIKED
THAT SHE HAD HAIR
LEGS

"YOU HAVE FAILED
ME FOR THE LAST... TIME,
ADMIRAL." IT'S THAT
SLIGHT PAUSE THAT
MAKES THE LINE...

THIS ROUND
ON ME, FELLAS.

SO HE TELLS US
THAT HE'S DONE IT WITH
FORTY SEVEN DIFFERENT
WOMEN! CAN YOU
BELIEVE

ANOTHER
DRINK

WHEN HE
THAT I
KILL MYSELF

NO WAY.
HE'S LIKE AN
ENGLISH TEACHER
OR SOMETHING,
RIGHT?

WHO? JAMES
SHE'S OKAY.

HAHAHA!

HEY, I THOUGHT
YOU WERE SUPPOSED
TO BE GETTING US
LAID?

MOVIE WHERE
DICK DID IT WITH
KIN' DONKEY!

YEAH

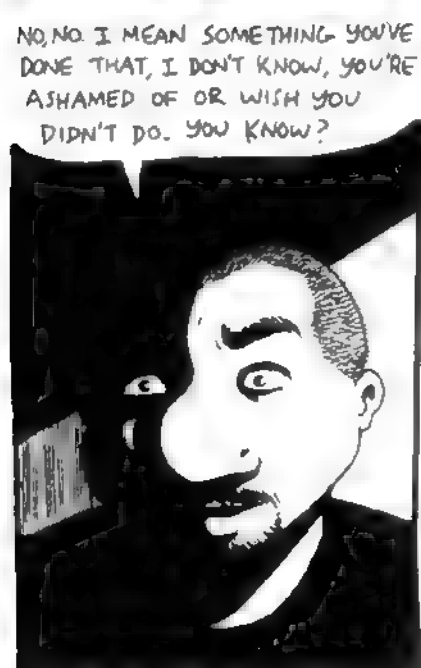
HAHA!
HAHA!

FORGET
IT.

HATE MY
FUCKIN' JOB

MOVIE
SUCKED

GREAT SOME
DONKEY'S HAVING
SEX BUT I'M NOT.



"WHEN I WAS LITTLE--LIKE TEN OR NINE--I WENT TO MY OLD COUSIN DONNA'S WEDDING. HER FATHER, MY GREAT UNCLE JOE WAS A REAL ASSHOLE. HE HATED KIDS, AND FOR SOME REASON HE SINGLED ME OUT FOR EXTRA CRUELTY."

"THE WEIRDEST THING ABOUT HIM WAS THAT EVEN THOUGH HE WAS LIKE IN HIS MID-FIFTIES, HE WAS AS INCONTINENT AS AN EIGHTY YEAR OLD. HE WOULD GO TO THE BATHROOM LITERALLY EVERY HALF AN HOUR."

UH-OH. I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS

"YEAH, WELL, JUST BEFORE THE WEDDING WAS ABOUT TO START, HE STARTS PICKING ON ME. HE'S CALLING ME A FAT LITTLE FAGGOT, STUFF LIKE THAT. I WAS JUST A LITTLE KID, SO I RUN TO THE BATHROOM BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO CRY IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY."

YOU WERE GOING TO START CRYING?

HE WAS RIGHT! YOU WERE A FAT LITTLE FAGGOT!

STILL, HE DIDN'T HAVE TO BE MEAN ABOUT IT!

"SO I'M IN THE MEN'S ROOM OF THE CHURCH, ALL SOBBY AND STUFF, WHEN MY MIND HATCHES A WICKED SCHEME!"

SO IT'S THE LAST FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE CEREMONY AND, AS I EXPECTED, UNCLE JOE GOES TO MAKE ONE LAST PIT STOP BUT--

CLICK

HUH?
WHO'S IN
THERE?

HEY, LEMME
IN, BUDDY! IT'S
AN EMERGENCY!

I HAD LOCKED THE DOOR BEHIND ME ON MY WAY OUT. SOMEONE RAN TO TRY AND FIND THE JANITOR WHO HAD A KEY..

HEY! OPEN
THIS GODDAMMED
DOOR WILL YA?

BUT FOR MY
UNCLE JOE

LET ME IN
THE MOTHER
FUCKIN' CAN
I COMMIT!

TIME
HAD

RUN
OUT

Heh Heh... OH
MY GOD. I GUESS
HE DIDN'T WEAR
DEPENDS", HUH?

SHIT, MAN! YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL
BAD ABOUT THAT! YOU SAID HE
WAS A DICK, RIGHT?

I KNOW... BUT I
GUESS I FEEL BAD FOR
MY COUSIN. IT SORT
OF RUINED THE WHOLE
WEDDING

SHE JUST GOT
DIVORCED (THAT'S
WHAT REMINDED ME)
AND I CAN'T HELP
BUT FEEL THAT
I'M SOMEHOW
RESPONSIBLE...

WELL... I THINK
MINE'S WORSE
THAN THAT

WHEN I WAS
AROUND FIFTEEN, I
STARTED GOING OUT
WITH THIS GIRL

ROMY VANGILDER. GOD, SHE WAS A
CUTIE. WE WOULD JUST FOOL AROUND,
THOUGH. WE NEVER HAD SEX, BUT MY
BALLS ACHED EVERY NIGHT.

MY BEST FRIEND WAS MY
NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR, GARY CARBONE.
HE WAS THE ONLY ONE OF US OLD
ENOUGH TO DRIVE, SO THAT SPRING
WE WOULD ALL DRIVE AROUND IN
HIS DADS CAR

CAN YOU
SEE WHERE
THIS IS
GOING?

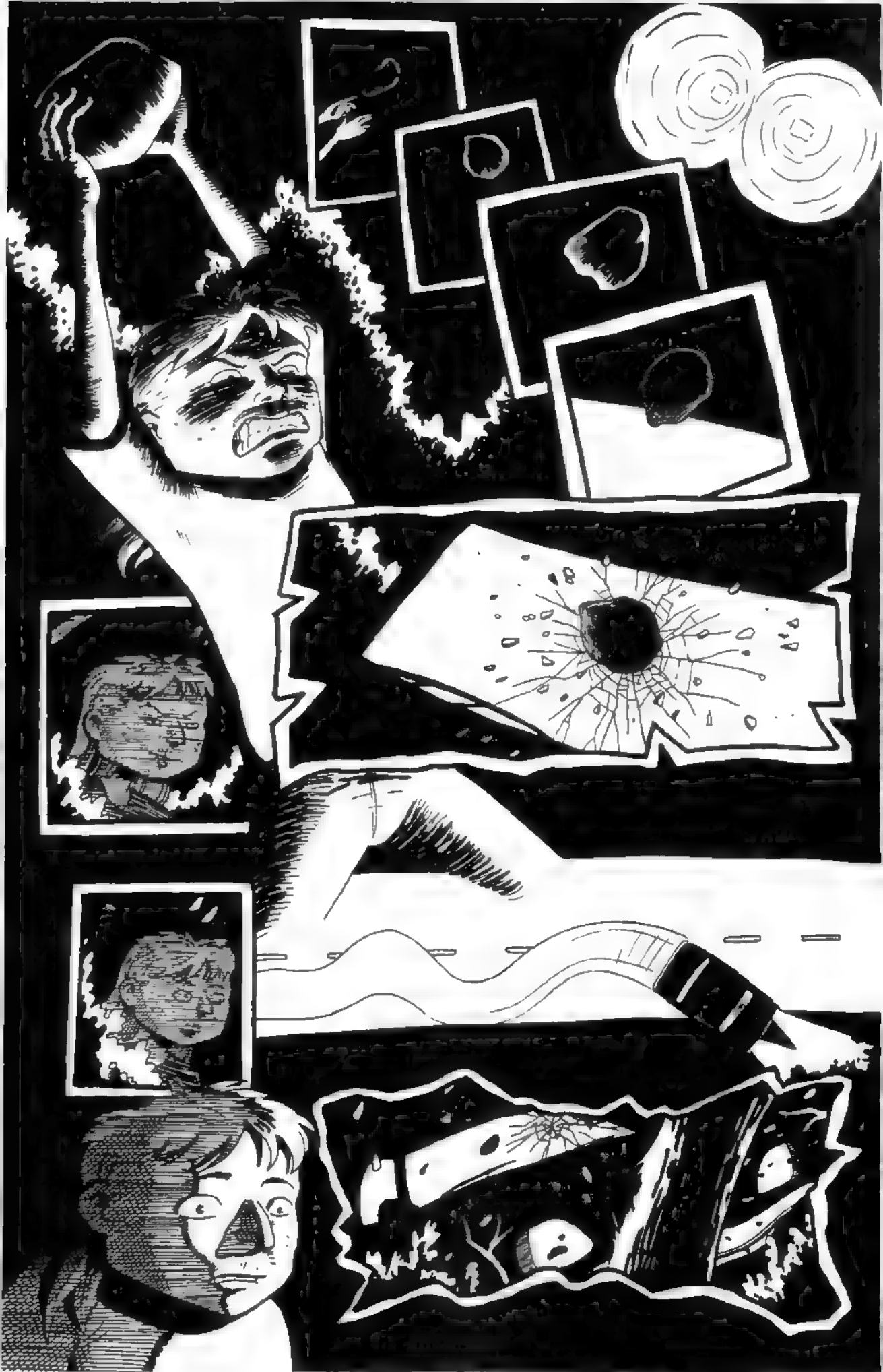
ANYWAY, ONE DAY
I WENT OVER TO
GARY'S HOUSE

WE'RE GONNA
ROCK DOWN TO
ELECTRIC AVENUE!



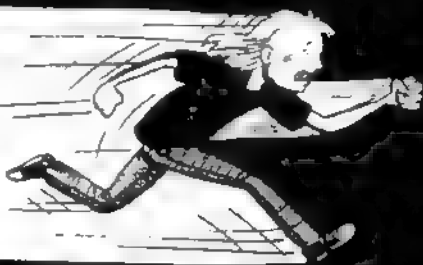
I SAT IN THE BUSHES -- FOR AN HOUR? SIX HOURS? TWENTY YEARS? -- CONTEMPLATING WHAT I'D SEEN, GETTING MORE AND MORE PISSED OFF. FINALLY, I SAW HIS DAD'S CAR COMING DOWN THE ROAD. I COULD FEEL MY HEART BEATING IN MY THROAT...





I RAN AWAY AS FAST AS I EVER HAVE OR EVER WILL IN MY ENTIRE LIFE. I WENT HOME AND TRIED TO PRETEND THE WHOLE THING NEVER HAPPENED.

I THOUGHT FOR SURE THAT ONE OF THE MANY FLASHING RED AND BLUE POLICE LIGHTS THAT PASSED BY WOULD STOP IN FRONT OF OUR HOUSE. I'D BE ARRESTED FOR MURDER

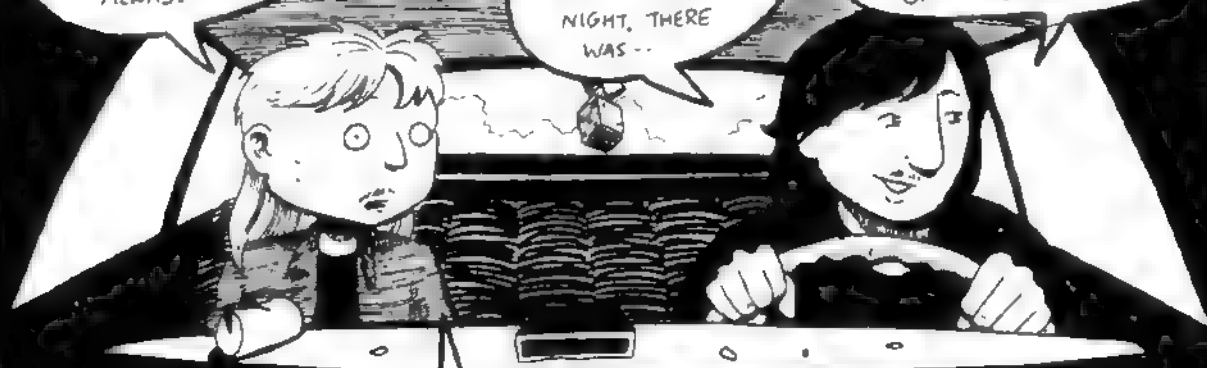


BUT THEY NEVER DID AND I NEVER WAS

IN FACT GARY PICKED ME UP AT 8AM FOR SCHOOL, SAME AS ALWAYS

I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T HEAR ANY OF THE SIRENS LAST NIGHT. THERE WAS --

SHIT! THERE! LOOK! SEE THAT TREE THAT'S ALL FULKED UP? THAT'S WHERE THE DUDE DROVE OFF THE ROAD!



SO IT TURNS OUT THAT THAT WASN'T EVEN GARY'S DAD'S CAR, LET ALONE GARY DRIVING.

SO I PUT SOME POOR SLOB-- HIS NAME WAS PAUL AVERY-- IN THE HOSPITAL. NOTHING MAJOR, LUCKILY

AND I NEVER GOT CAUGHT

BUT YOU WANT TO KNOW THE SADDEST PART? THE MOST PATHETIC PART?



I FELT SO GUILTY ABOUT THE WHOLE THING THAT I PRETENDED THAT I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE WHOLE GARY- ROMY THING.



I WENT OUT WITH HER FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR--UNTIL SHE MOVED IN THE SPRING.

I'M 90% SURE GARY WAS GOING OUT WITH HER, TOO, BUT I PLAYED THE CUCKOLD



HOW'S THAT FOR A TEAR JERKER?





WHEN I WAS FOURTEEN
MY BEST FRIEND WAS
DOUG RUBENSTEIN



THAT SUMMER, HE AND
HIS FAMILY WERE GOING
TO FLORIDA ON VACATION
AND THEY ASKED ME IF I
WANTED TO GO AS WELL



MY MOTHER HAD BEEN
SICK FOR A WHILE, SO
MONEY WAS TIGHT.



I ARGUED THAT WE ONLY
HAD TO PAY FOR THE
AIR FARE -- DOUG'S PARENTS
WOULD COVER THE REST



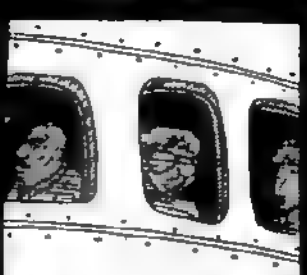
"I'M SURE THEY WOULD,
BUT IT WOULD BE AN
IMPOSITION. THEY--"



BUT I WAS RELENTLESS.
I BEGGED. I WAS EXTRA
NICE. I WAS MEAN. I
POUTED. I HINTED SUBTLY.



FINALLY SHE GAVE IN.
I COULD GO!



IT WAS MY FIRST TRIP
ON AN AIRPLANE AND
WHAT COULD BE BETTER
THAN A TRIP TO FLORIDA
WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND?



WE DIDN'T SPEND MUCH TIME
WITH HIS FAMILY. AT NIGHT
WE'D ROAM THE DINERS
AND ARCADES, HANGING
OUT AND OGGLING GIRLS.



WE WERE TWO NERDS
SURGING WITH HORMONES
AND NOWHERE TO CHANNEL
THEM BUT INTO "BERSERK"
AND "DIG DUG."



IT WAS THEN THAT
I MET ALLISON.



IT'S FUNNY HOW YOU GET
TO KNOW PEOPLE FASTER
ON VACATION THAN YOU
DO IN REAL LIFE.



EVERY NIGHT, ALLISON, ME, DOUG AND ALLISON'S OLDER SISTER WOULD MEET AT BANISZEWSKI'S ARCADE AND FUN HOUSE



AND WIND UP MAKING OUT IN THE BACK OF JOHN'S DRIVE-IN DINER



THE FIRST TIME WE KISSED, "WHEN DOVES CRY" WAS ON THE RADIO AND THE SMELL OF GREASY FRENCH FRIES HUNG IN THE AIR.



WE IMAGINED A WHOLE ELABORATE FUTURE WITH EACH OTHER, WITH THE KIND OF EXCITEMENT TEENAGERS CAN HAVE BUT ADULTS HAVE LOST



I STILL GET CHILLS REMEMBERING THE FIRST TIME SHE LET ME TOUCH HER CHEST -- OVER THE SHIRT, OF COURSE



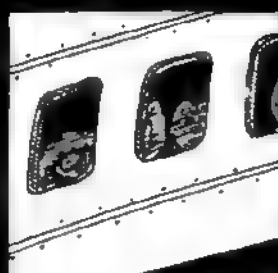
I CAN ALSO VIVIDLY RECALL THE NIGHT I DROPPED HER OFF AT HER PARENTS' HOTEL. I WALKED BACK ALONE, ALONG THE BEACH..



WHEN I GOT BACK TO THE ROOM, MRS RUBENSTEIN SAID THAT MY AUNT PHIL CALLED AND TO CALL HER BACK TONIGHT



MY MOTHER HAD DIED THAT AFTERNOON



THE NEXT DAY I HAD MY SECOND TRIP ON AN AIRPLANE -- BACK HOME TO NEW JERSEY.



THE WHOLE WAY BACK, I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW I HAD WANTED TO GO ON THAT TRIP MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD.







YEAH, SO MY GRANDFATHER
LIVED HERE FOR, LIKE, TWENTY
YEARS. WHEN HE HAD HIS
STROKE LAST YEAR, MY
FOLKS SHIPPED HIM OFF
TO ARIZONA.

THEY LET
ME HAVE THIS PLACE,
BUT I'M NOT READY TO
LEAVE THE CITY
YET.

YOU CAN USE
WHATEVER FURNITURE
YOU'D LIKE, JUST PUT
THE REST IN THE
BASEMENT.

THERE'S A
FIREPLACE...

THE

END

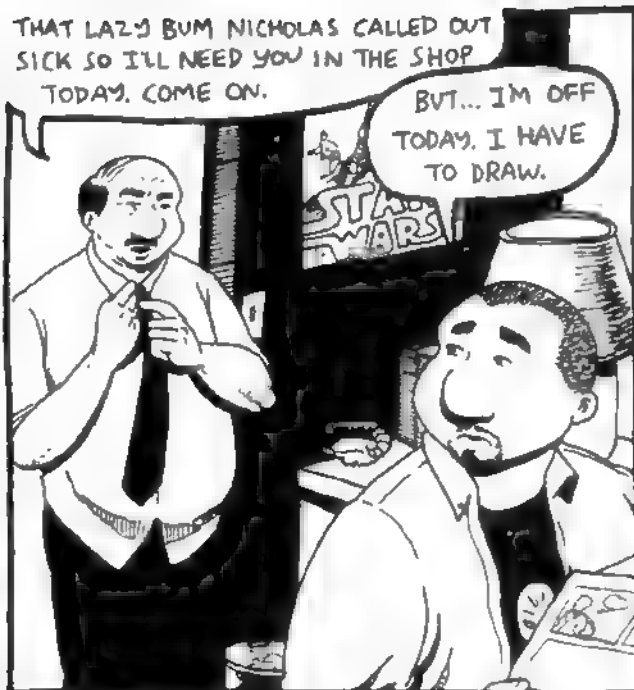


YOU'D HAVE TO
GET A CAR, OF COURSE
AND CABLE, IF YOU
WANT ANY T.V.
AT ALL.

BUT OVERALL,
IT'S A NICE LITTLE
PLACE, REASONABLE
RENT...

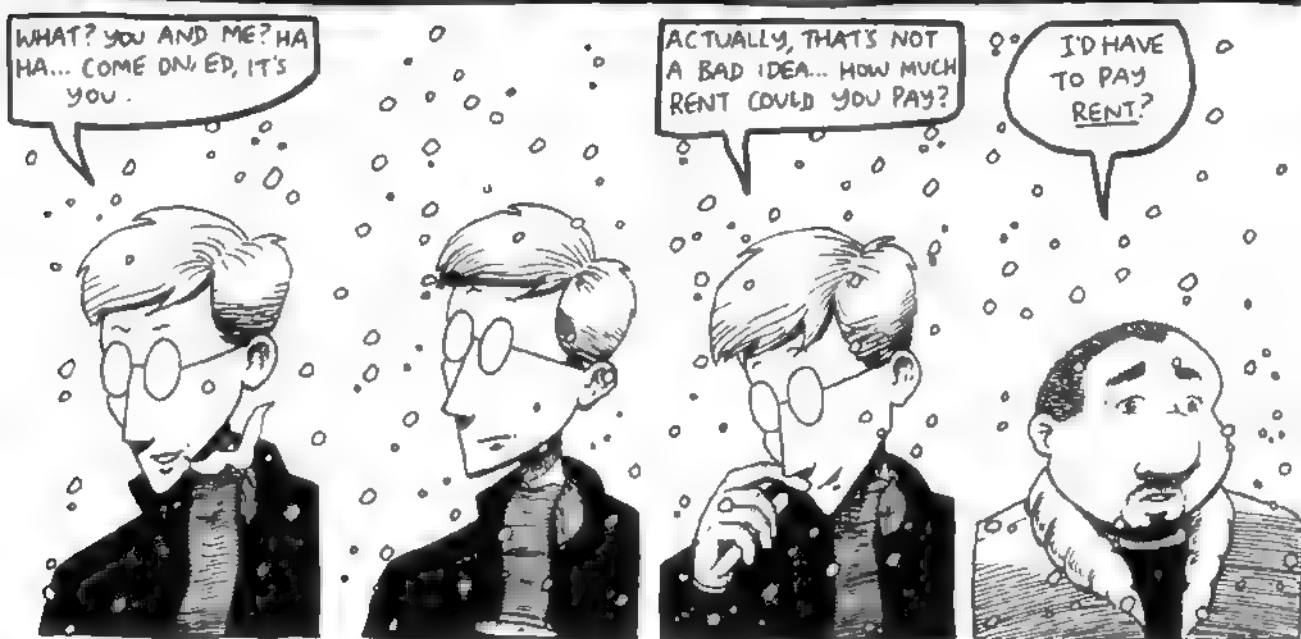
YOU COULD
MOVE IN AS SOON
AS WE HAMMER
OUT A LEASE!





**WORKING
CLASS
HERO**







June 9 Issue 5

WHAT'S NEW? #4
THE PUM #57
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JERRY LANGFORD #68
WHO READS THE JUNK #68

Irving Flavor to Attend GraNoSequon

It was announced that Irving Flavors, Golden Age legend and creator of The Nightstalker would be a guest at this year's Graphic Novel and Sequential Art Convention at the Newark Sheraton.



this February
Flavor recently became
a figure of controversy
as he has begun a crusade to win the rights to
The Nightstalker, who he
created for Zoom

Comics 1942. He has remained out of the spotlight since his retirement and this will be his first convention in eight years. He will be attending as a guest of another magazine.

will be attending as a guest of another comics magazine who will be giving him a "lifetime achievement award" at a ceremony on the second day of the con.

For more information
about the convention,
call (516) 922-9463
or go to <http://members.aol.com/BOPalex>

Comics' Best Year:
Record Number of
Shops Open. Sales
Never Before

The comics industry has boomed, according to Wall Street, with an unprecedented eight comics publishers entering the Forbes 500 the first time.

for the first time.
"It's just incredible" raves
owner Kristen
Slebecker. "Who would've
guessed comics sales would
go from the toilet to, well,
what ever the opposite of a
toilet would be!"
Shop owner Larry Vitros is
also happy. "Fuck yeah! I
(Story continued on page 7)



or more info
about the conviction,
call (516) 922-9463
or go to <http://members.aol.com/BOPalex>

Consists "Double Crosses"
Another Publisher

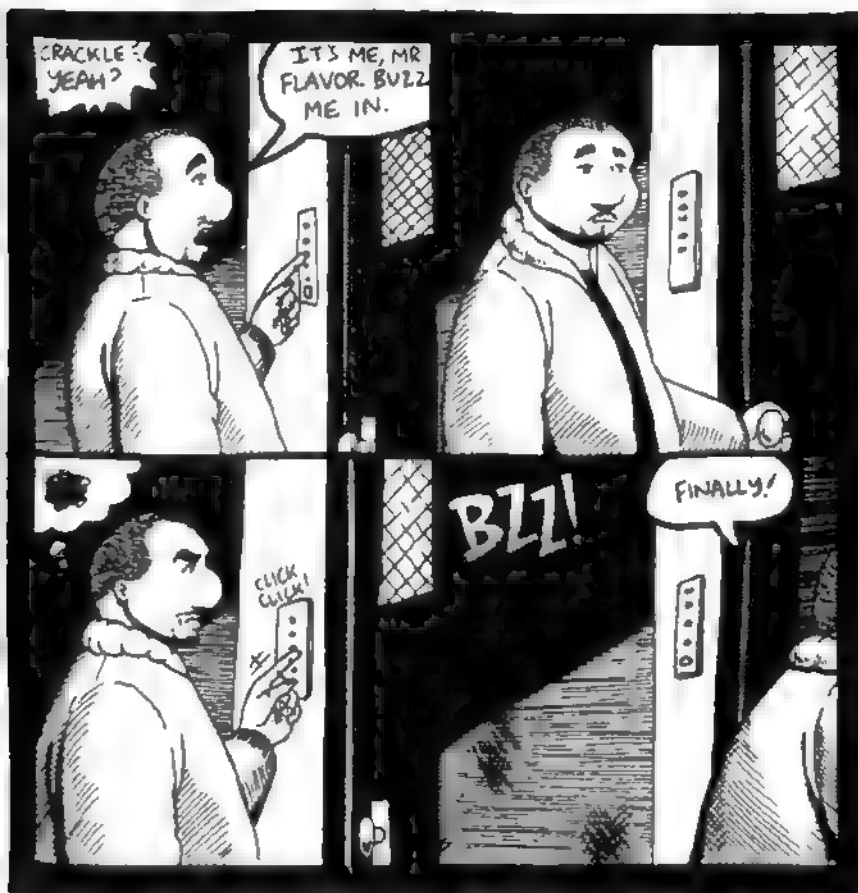
lisher he has worked with
just two years "Tony's a n
Top Shelf publish
I love

Another
Comics genius Tony Co-
sight has broken his con-
tract with Zoom Comics,
making them the fifth pub-

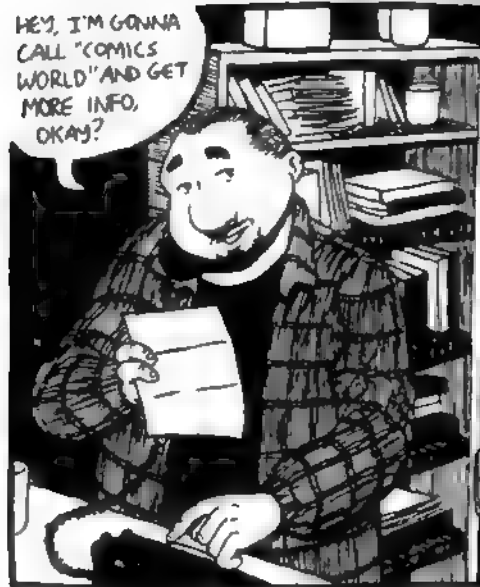
lisher he has worked with in just two years. "Tony's a nut!" claims Top Shelf publisher Chris Starnes. "But I love him!"

**JUSTICE
IS BACK!**









HEY, I'M GONNA CALL "COMICS WORLD" AND GET MORE INFO, OKAY?



HUH? OH, SURE, SURE, OH, RIGHT.

I GOTTA USE THE CAN ANYHOW.



"COMICS WORLD, YOUR GUIDE TO THE WORLD OF COMICS."

CAN I HELP YOU?



YES, THIS IS ED VELASQUEZ. I'M CALLING ON BEHALF--



OH MY GOD! ED?



UH... YYYEEAH?



YOU'RE IRVING FLAVOR'S ASSISTANT, RIGHT? THIS IS HILDY!



HIL...? OH YEAH! HOW, UH, HOW YOU DOING?



OH, FINE, YOU KNOW HANGING IN, HOW ABOUT YOU?



YEAH, YEAH... OKAY... HEH!



IT'S GREAT NEWS ABOUT MR. FLAVOR GETTING THAT AWARD, RIGHT?



YEAH! GREAT NEWS!



UH... YOU'LL PROBABLY GO TO THE CONVENTION, RIGHT? TO SEE HIM GET IT.



YEAH, I GUESS SO! HEH!



GREAT! I GUESS WE'LL BE SEEING EACH OTHER, THEN!



UH, SEEING EACH OTHER AT THE CON, I MEAN!!



SURE! OKAY, THEN!



ALRIGHT! HEH HEH!



HEH... UH.



OKAY, THEN! I'LL SEE YOU!



ALRIGHT! BYE, ED!



BYE!



BYE!



WHAT'S THIS FOR?
ANOTHER CEREAL
BOX? OR A MEXICAN
TOY COMPANY?

NAH! THEY'RE MY NEW
CHARACTERS! I WAS STRUCK
BY A GOD DAMNED BOLT OF
INSPIRATION THE OTHER
DAY!

I FIGURE INSTEAD
OF BELLY-ACHIN' ABOUT THE
NIGHTSTALKER ALL THE TIME
I SHOULD COME UP WITH A
NEW CHARACTER.

METEON!

HMM. THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA
ACTUALLY. WITH ALL THE PUBLICITY
YOU'VE BEEN GETTING, SOMEONE'S
BOUND TO PICK IT UP!

ONLY...

WELL...

HE'S SORT OF, UH,
OLD FASHIONED.

WHAT?!

"ONLY?" "WHAT?"
WHAT "ONLY?!"

UH, SUPER HEROES
HAVE SORT OF CHANGED.
NO ONE HAS TEEN-AGE
SIDE KICKS ANYMORE.

AND HIS SHOES
LOOK A LITTLE
WIMPY.

WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?!
A BUNCH OF 'EM
WEAR THOSE KIND
OF SHOES!

ALL I'M SAYING
IS HE COULD BE MORE,
LIKE, MODERN. GRITIER,
MORE... REALISTIC.

WAIT A
SECOND...

WHAT ABOUT
SOMETHING MORE
LIKE THIS?

WHAT? ED,
HE'S SUPPOSED TO
BE THE DAMN GOOD
GUY!

AND WHO THE
HELL IS SHE?! THEY'D
NEVER LET YOU GET
AWAY WITH AN
OUTFIT LIKE
THAT!

THAT'S WHAT
COSMIC KID
SHOULD LOOK

COMET
KID.

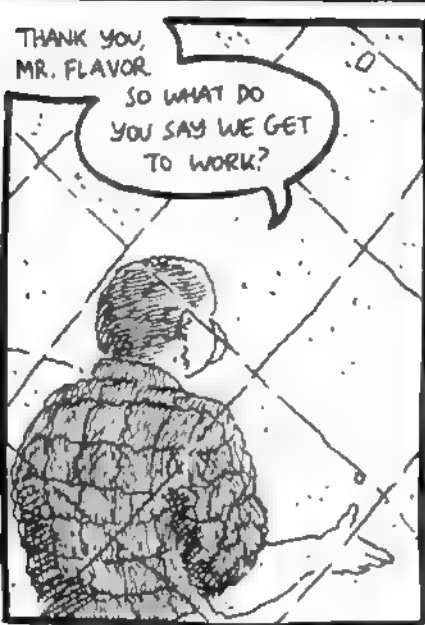
...COMET KID
SHOULD LOOK
LIKE, I
THINK.

AND YOU CAN
GET AWAY WITH
AN OUTFIT LIKE
THAT NOWADAYS
(PEOPLE
SORT OF EXPECT
IT, ACTUALLY.)

WELL... I GUESS I COULD USE
SOME OF YOUR SUGGESTIONS.

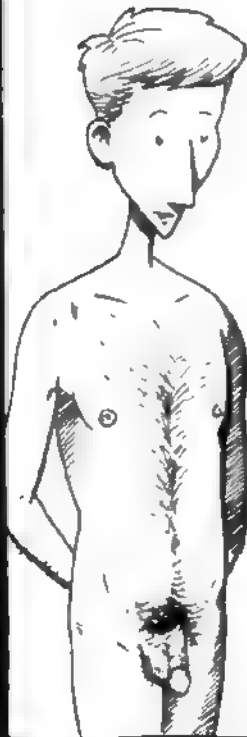
I DO
LIKE THE
SPIKES.

WELL, WHATEVER
I'M JUST TRYING
TO HELP OUT.

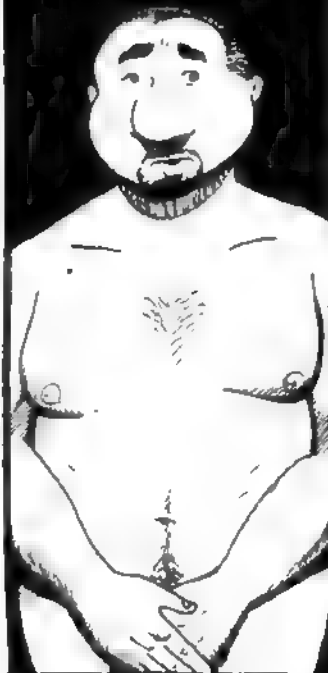


WHAT
WILL
YOU
ASK
GOD
?

CAN I
SEE SOME
DINOSAURS?



OH...
MASTURBATION
ISN'T REALLY LIKE
A SIN, IS IT?



CAN YOU TELL
ME WHERE MY
SISTER IS?



WHY?



HOW COULD YOU INVENT
BUSTER KEATON, AFTER-
NOON NAPS AND "THE FOUR
SEASONS" BUT ALSO PAULY
SHORE, HEMORRHOIDS AND
ANTIETAM?



HOW DO
YOU SLEEP
AT NIGHT?



FORGIVE
ME





"Do you work here?"
Every time Grant heard the question at his job, he wanted to run an awl into his ear—or the customer's ear, either would do. But he knew he never would. He'd continue to be the same spineless, aimless jellyfish of a bookstore clerk he always was (and always would be), who would rather complain about life than do something to cha



Old Nick, the sea captain, was a rough, tough, son of a bitch his mother had asserted, shortly before he fed her entrails to the crocodiles he kept below decks. If only she had listened to reason, Nick thought as he breathed in the salty air nibbling a cuticle, and told me where Captain Ghoti had buried his t

Love is Here to Stay



"I Quit!!" Grant hollered so loud the veins on his neck bulged with fury.

"B-b-b-but you can't!" his stupid puny boss stammered. "I know we've treated you shabbily in the past but without you, who will handle the stupid customers with all their stupid questions about their stupid fucking god damned books? Who will help the stupid fucking shit piss asshole mother fu



Dear Editors,

I never believed the letters in your magazine until I met Nina, the model who moved in to my building last fall.

"Can I borrow a cup of sugar?" she purred, licking her full, ruby red lips. Under her pleated plaid skirt and tantalizingly unbuttoned white blouse I recognized her curvy physique from magazine ads. As my hand kneaded her firm, dusky buttocks, I couldn't help noticing she wasn't wearing kni





PUT YOUR SHOES ON AND I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT ON THE WAY.

WH-- ON THE WAY WHERE? ST VINCENTS? MOUNT SINAI? THE MORGUE?

IT'S A SURPRISE. SUGAR CAKES, SO COME ON AND GET DRESSED!

OH, YAY. ANOTHER SURPRISE.

WHAT, DID YOU KILL SOMEBODY? YOU HAVE HERPES? LONG LOST TWIN?

YES, YES AND YES! NOW HURRY UP!

SO I GET THIS MESSAGE AT MY VOICEMAIL AT WORK, OKAY? YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHO IT WAS!

UMMM. YOKO ONO?

ELIZABETH PIERBORNE! FROM "INSIDE SCOOP!"

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?!

SHE READ MY ARTICLE AND WANTS TO DO A STORY ABOUT IRVING FOR THE SHOW!

AND THE BEST PART IS THEY WANT TO INTERVIEW ME FOR A PART OF IT!

ISN'T THAT MARVELOUS?!





DOROTHY TOLD ME ABOUT YOU NEEDING A NEW CRIB IN LIGHT OF YOUR EVICTION.

AHHH! SO THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

IT'S THE PERFECT PLACE FOR YOU, SWEETIE! LOOK AROUND!

VU

THIS USED TO BE FRANCIS'S DARK-ROOM. IT'S EMPTY NOW.

IT'S WARM, RED GLOW REPLACED BY THE STARK GLARE OF A FLORESCENT BULB.

THE LIVING ROOM.

FRANCI AND I ARGUED WHETHER OR NOT WE SHOULD GET CABLE...

THIS IS THE KITCHEN. I WAS IN HERE MAKING HOT COCOA WHEN MY GIRLFRIEND FRANCIS TOLD ME SHE WAS DUMPING ME.

AND FINALLY, THE MASTER BED ROOM... WHERE

WHERE WE

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?

IT SEEMS LIKE A GREAT PLACE, ROB.

SO WHAT WOULD THE DAMAGE BE? WHAT KIND OF RENT WOULD I PAY?

UH... WELL, THE RENT FOR THE WHOLE PLACE IS \$800, WHICH ISN'T TOO BAD FOR THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.

HMM, SO I'D BE PAYING \$400? I GUESS I COULD SWING THAT.

WHATEVER, DUDE. HOWEVER YOU WANT TO WORK IT.

THE UTILITIES AREN'T INCLUDED AND IF YOU--

WAIT... UH, SHOULDN'T WE JUST SPLIT THE WHOLE THING FIFTY-FIFTY? I'LL PAY \$400 AND YOU PAY \$400?

UNLESS YOU HAD.. UH...

WH...?

OHHHH!
NO, NO! YOU THINK I'M LOOKING FOR A ROOMMATE!
NO!

NOW THAT I LOST MY JOB I CAN'T PAY EVEN HALF THE RENT.

I'M MOVING OUT, DUDE!

OH, OKAY. BUT I COULD NEVER AFFORD THIS PLACE ON MY OWN.

OHH, YOU'RE RIGHT SWEETIE YOU PROBABLY COULDN'T...









AND I WAS CAUGHT OFF
GUARD THAT YOU'D MAKE
PLANS FOR NEW LIVING
ARRANGEMENTS AND NOT
EVEN MENTION IT TO ME!

SO I GUESS
WE'RE EVEN.

I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU
BUT YOU THREW ME OFF
WITH THAT WHOLE
PHONE PRANK!

OH, OKAY. WELL, I
GUESS THAT'S THAT.

I NEVER
EVEN...

IF I HAD THOUGHT THAT
YOU WERE THINKING OF
US MOVING IN TOGETHER
OF COURSE I WOULD'VE
TALKED ABOUT IT WITH
YOU.

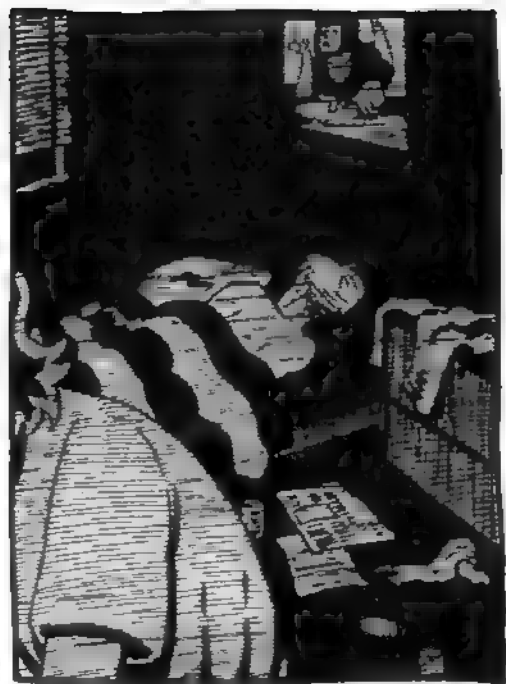
OKAY

I THINK IT WILL BE
GOOD FOR ED, TOO. HE'S 23
AND HE'S NEVER LIVED
AWAY FROM HOME.

YOU'RE
RIGHT!

WELL, TALK TO ME
ABOUT IT! DON'T
JUST GET MAD
AND BE...

I'M NOT
MAD.







THAT'S RIGHT! I REMEMBER
READING ABOUT THAT!



REALLY?

UH, THAT HE WAS DOING A
READING, I MEAN. NOT
THAT YOU WENT TO IT,
OBVIOUSLY.



HA
HA

HEH

SO

UM

WHAT DO
WE DO NOW?



HMM? OH! RIGHT!
UH...
CUSTOMERS,
I GUESS.



YOU'LL FIND THAT THE
BEST WAY TO RELATE
TO THE CUSTOMERS IS
TO THINK OF THEM
AS RETARDED CRO-
MAGNONS



AH, YES. "BOOBUS
AMERICANUS" I USED
TO WORK AT THE
MAIN BRANCH OF THE
LIBRARY SO I THINK
I'LL GET THE HANG-
OF IT.

REALLY? THE
ONE WITH THE LIONS
AND EVERYTHING?
WOW! DID YOU WORK
IN THE BIG READ...

EXCUSE ME,
YOU WORK
HERE,
CHIEF?



YES CAN I
HELP YOU,
SIR?

YEAH, I'M
LOOKIN' FOR A
TEX BOOK. FOR
A CLASS.

"ADVANCED
ECONOMICS"



OKAY. DO YOU
KNOW THE AUTHOR'S
NAME?

IT'S FOR A CLASS.
HUNTER COLLEGE.



DO YOU KNOW WHO WROTE THE BOOK?

?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT DON'T SAY. IT'S A TEX BOOK: NO ONE WROTE IT. COME ON, BIG GUY!



OKAY, WE'LL GO LOOK IT UP WAIT RIGHT HERE.

YEAH!



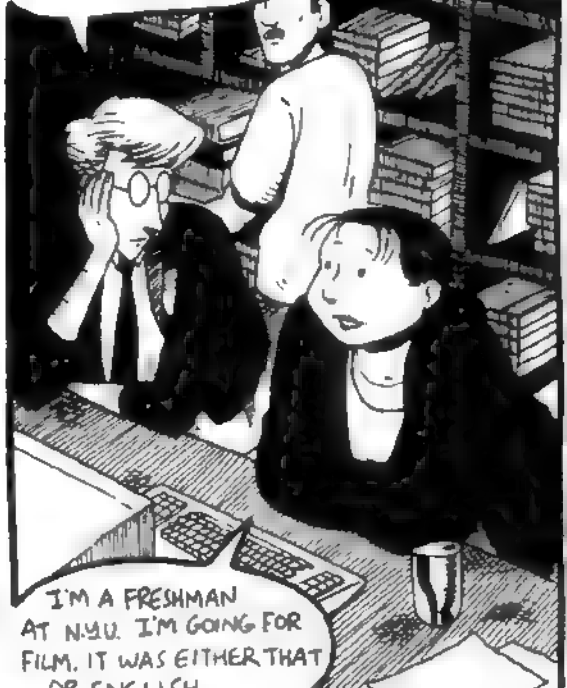
SO I TYPE IN "ADVANCED ECONOMICS" AND HIT THE..

NAH WE MUST HAVE 900 BOOKS CALLED "ADVANCED ECONOMICS" AND SINCE BRANIAC-5 THERE DOESN'T KNOW THE AUTHOR WE DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE HE WANTS.



WE PUTTER AROUND BACK HERE FOR A FEW MINUTES AND THEN WE TELL HIM IT'S SOLD OUT.

SO, CAPRICE, DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL OR..?



REALLY? I WAS AN ENGLISH MAJOR AT HUNTER!

I WANT TO BE A WRITER.



THAT'S COOL! HAVE YOU HAD ANY OF YOUR STUFF PUBLISHED?

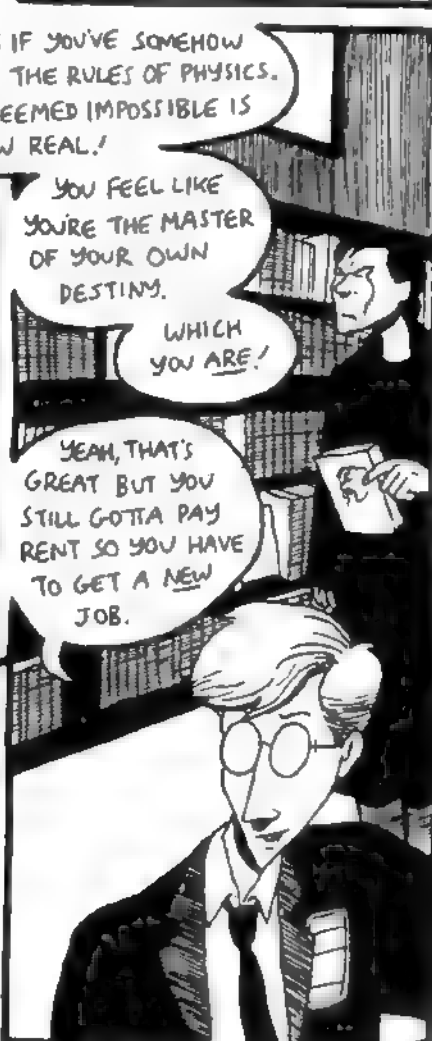
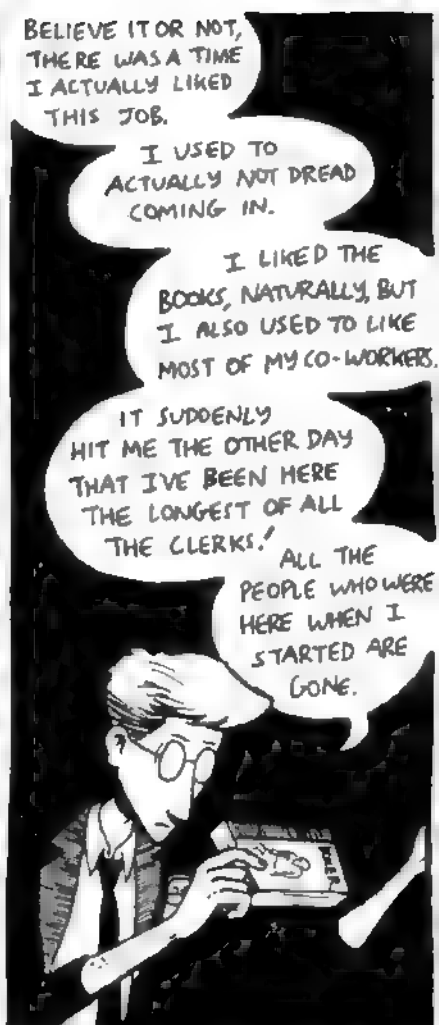


UM.

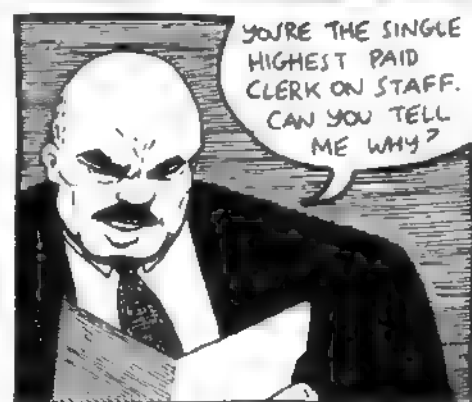
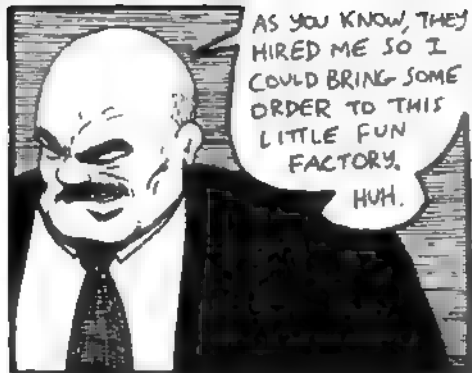
NO, SIR I'M AFRAID WE'RE SOLD OUT OF "ADVANCED ECONOMICS." CHECK BACK IN, LIKE, SIX WEEKS.



AHHH, AT'S AWRIGHT. I'LL DROP THE CLASS.









YOU WORK HERE, RIGHT?
WHERE DO YOU SELL
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
ON TAPE?



DO YOU WORK HERE? WHO
DO I TALK TO ABOUT
GETTING MY MANUSCRIPT
PUBLISHED?



LAST NIGHT, RIGHT? I
PICKED OUT SOME BOOKS I
WANTED TO GET BUT I
DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY,
RIGHT? SO I HID THEM
ON A SHELF BUT NOW IT
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE
PUT THEM AWAY SO CAN
YOU TELL ME WHERE I
CAN FIND THEM?



YOU DO
WORK HERE,
RIGHT?



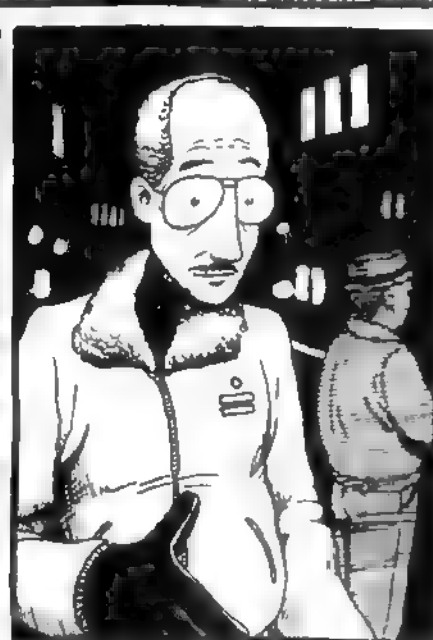
SEE YOU
TOMORROW!



YEP.



SHERMAN?



SHIT!

HI,
DAD.

YOU KNOW, YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF GUTS COMING HERE AFTER WHAT YOU PULLED.

NOW THAT THE COAST IS CLEAR YOU FIGURE YOU CAN JUST WALTZ BACK IN?

HOW DARE YOU JUDGE ME?

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, PHIN, THEY'RE STILL MY BOYS!

IT'S MY RIGHT TO--

THAT'S FUNNY, THEY DIDN'T SEEM TO BE YOUR 'BOYS' WHEN THEIR MOTHER WAS SICK!

HOW COME YOU DIDN'T COME SEE YOUR 'BOYS' THEN, GREG?

I'LL TELL YOU WHY: YOU WERE TOO BUSY WITH YOUR OWN BULLSHIT!

I'M NOT OBLIGATED TO TOLERATE THIS!

YOU HAVE NO POWER OVER ME

I'M GOING TO COME BACK WHEN YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A RATIONAL PERSON!

YOU COME BACK WHEN YOU'RE READY TO TELL SHERMAN AND JOE YOU'RE SORRY!

I HAVE NOTHING TO BE SORRY FOR!!

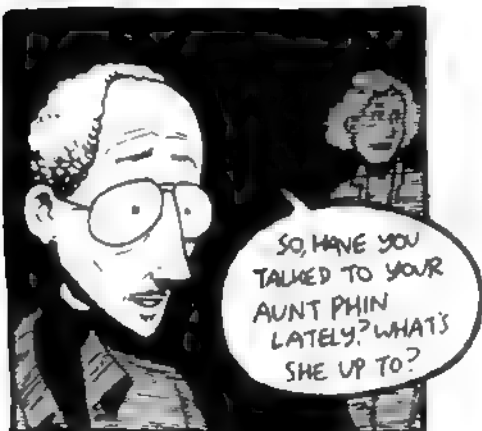
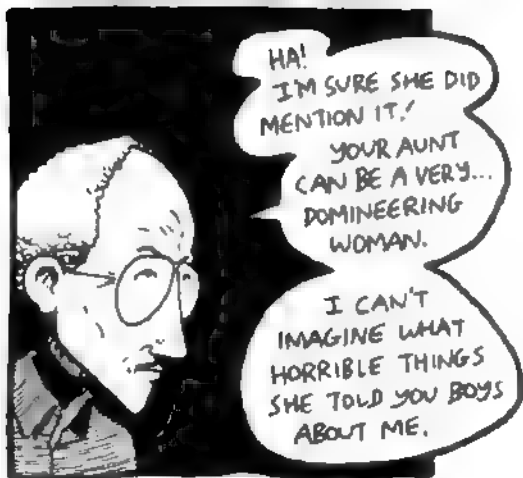
YOU PATHETIC SON OF A BITCH!!



Return of the Daddy







JOANNE? WE'RE BACK!
WOO-EE, YOU SHOULD'VE
SEEN HOW PACKED IT
WAS! EVERY SLOB FROM
HERE TO TRENTON.



? OH MY GOD,
WHAT'S WRONG?
DID DR ENGEL
CALL OR

NO
GREG

HES



HES IN
PITTSBURGH.

HE SAID
HES NOT
COMING
BACK

WHAT?
WHAT DID.



MOM! LOOK
WHAT WE FOUND
DOWN AT THE
SHORE!

LET ME
SHOW HER,
DICKWEED!

IT'S A
HORSEFLY
CRAB!



GUYS, UM, YOUR
MOM'S NOT FEELING
WELL, SO WHY DON'T
YOU SHOW HER
LATER, OKAY?

AND JOE?
DON'T SAY
"DICKWEED"



SORRY,
AUNT PHIN



PART OF MY PROBLEM
-AND I THINK YOU'LL
FIND IT'S PART OF
YOURS AS WELL--

IS THAT I CONSTANTLY
FOUND MYSELF DOING THINGS
TO PLEASE OTHER PEOPLE, BUT
NEGLECTING MY OWN
NEEDS.

BUT IT'S
NOT AN EASY
THING TO DO.

WE LIVE IN A
SOCIETY WHICH
MAKES US FEEL GUILTY
FOR DOING WHAT MAKES
US FEEL GOOD.

WE FEEL
THAT WE DON'T
DESERVE IT.

I DISCOVERED THAT
I CAN LIVE MY LIFE
THEY WAY I WANT
TO! THAT I HAVE
THE RIGHT TO
SAY "NO."

I CAN TELL
YOU THIS: SHE'LL
PROBABLY BECOME
UPSET. ANGRY,
CRYING.

AND SHE HAS
A RIGHT TO HER
FEELINGS BUT THAT
IS EXACTLY WHAT
THEY ARE: HER
FEELINGS.

YOU CAN'T MAKE
PEOPLE ANGRY--OR SAD,
OR HAPPY OR WHATEVER
-- ONLY THEY HAVE
THAT POWER.

WE ALL
CONTROL OUR
EMOTIONAL LIVES,
SHERMAN.

TAKE
THIS SITUATION
WITH YOU GIRLFRIEND,
DOROTHY. (DOROTHY,
RIGHT?) IF YOU FEEL
THAT YOU DON'T WANT
TO LIVE WITH HER, FOR
WHATEVER REASON, SAY
"NO."

I MEAN, ESPECIALLY
WITH A BIG DECISION
LIKE THAT.

YOU CAN'T BE
RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE WAY OTHER
PEOPLE FEEL

JUST
YOURSELF.

AND ONCE YOU
BREAK OUT OF THAT
TERRIBLE PATTERN..

THE PATTERN
THAT SAYS "OTHER
PEOPLE'S NEEDS ARE
MORE IMPORTANT THAN
MY OWN. MY WISHES
DON'T COUNT."

ONCE YOU FREE
YOURSELF FROM THAT
EMOTIONAL QUICKSAND...

YOU'LL FIND
YOURSELF A
WHOLE LOT
HAPPIER.

DAD.

WHY
DID YOU COME
HERE?

I WANT TO THANK
YOU GUYS FOR
COMING. I--

I KNOW WE'VE HAD
SOME ROUGH PATCHES IN
THE PAST AND IT'S BEEN
WELL, WAY TOO LONG
SINCE WE'VE BEEN ALL
TOGETHER, BUT I'M
HOPING

WELL, I'M HOPING THIS
CAN BE A NEW START

I KNOW I'VE MISSED OUT
ON A LOT SINCE, UH, SINCE THE
SEPARATION, BUT

I'M FEELING THAT
WE CAN START THE
HEALING PROCESS AND
BECOME A FAMILY
AGAIN

I'VE . STARTED THIS
PROCESS IN MY OWN
LIFE, STARTING

I'D LIKE YOU
ALL TO MEET
MARA. WE
MET IN MY
GROUP.

HELLO!
HEH

I SUPPOSE THE
BIG NEWS IS THAT
THIS SPRING, MARA
AND I ARE--

WE'RE
GETTING
MARRIED!

HAHA!

I KNOW! IT'S
A SHOCK, BUT WE'RE
HOPING YOU'LL SUPPORT
US IN OUR--

UH.
DAD?

I NEVER
WANT TO SEE
YOU AGAIN UNTIL
YOUR FUNERAL.





MARA NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND

MARA GOT UPSET."

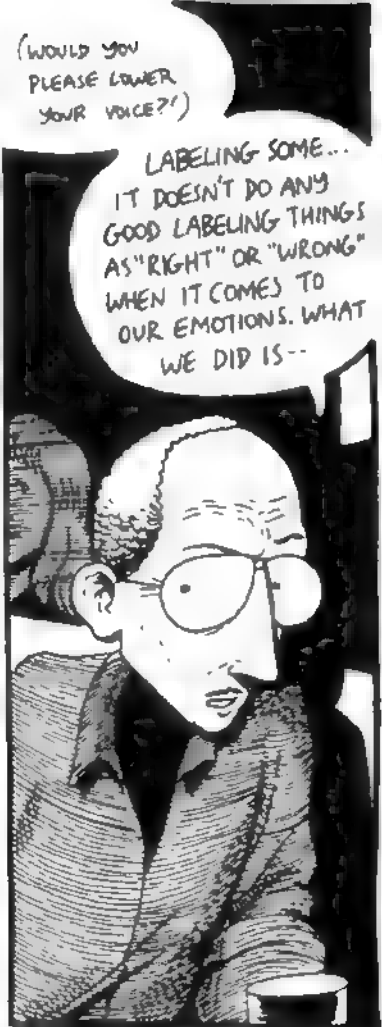
YOU MAKE IT SOUND AS IF SHE'S THE ONE TO BLAME FOR YOU CHEATING ON HER

NO ONE IS TO "BLAME." WE ALL HAVE TO LOOK INTO OUR--



NO! WRONG! YOU ARE TO BLAME! YOU CHEATED ON YOUR WIFE!

GOD! CAN'T YOU EVEN ADMIT THAT WHAT YOU DID WAS WRONG?



(WOULD YOU PLEASE LOWER YOUR VOICE?)

LABELING SOME... IT DOESN'T DO ANY GOOD LABELING THINGS AS "RIGHT" OR "WRONG" WHEN IT COMES TO OUR EMOTIONS. WHAT WE DID IS--



JESUS! YOU'LL USE ANY, UH, UH, COCKAMAMIE, SELF-HELP BULLSHIT PRETZEL RATIONALE TO GET OUT OF ADMITTING THAT YOU JUST PLAIN FUCKED UP!

JUST A MINUTE! HOW DARE--



YOUR PROBLEM ISN'T THAT YOU NEVER TAKE YOUR OWN FEELINGS INTO ACCOUNT! YOUR PROBLEM IS YOU DO NOTHING BUT TAKE YOUR OWN FEELINGS INTO ACCOUNT!



YOU'RE LIKE A BULL IN A, UH, CHINA STORE! YOU RUN AROUND DOING WHATEVER YOU WANT AND WHEN SOMETHING BREAKS, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT!

"THE CHINA SHOULD'VE BEEN MORE CAREFUL!"

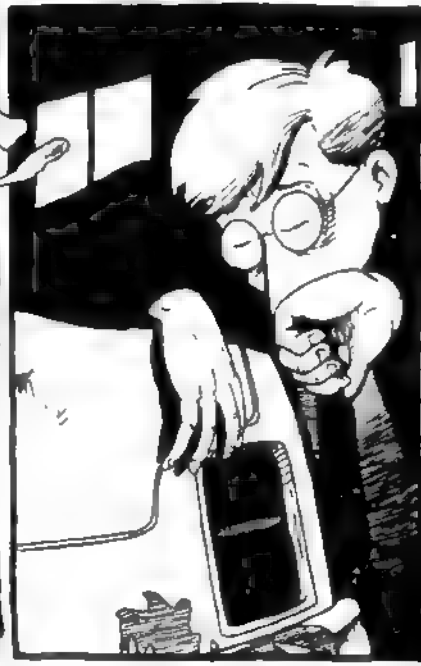


YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO TALK TO ME LIKE THIS

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MARRIAGE?

YOU CAN'T EVEN--





WHAT WAS YOUR WORST JOB EVER?

I WAS THE ASSISTANT MANAGER OF A PATTY PALACE MY SENIOR YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL

NEXT!

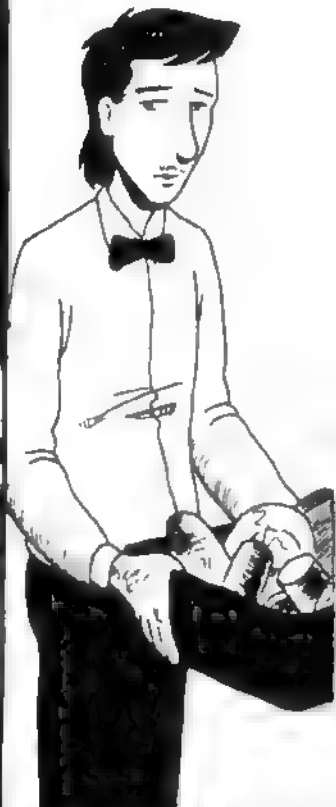


ONE SUMMER I WORKED AS A LANDSCAPER.

(YOU THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO SAY THE BOOK STORE, RIGHT?)



FOR ONE DAY I WAS A BUSBOY AT A GOURMET DELI.



UMMM... MY JOB AT "A&J'S PIERCING SHACK" WAS PRETTY BORING.

THIS WAS IN ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA, SO YOU CAN IMAGINE.



BABY SITTER.

I WOULD HAVE TO SAY MY BABYSITTING JOB.



ONE TIME I WAS AN ASSISTANT TO THIS OLD CARTOONIST GUY WHO DID NOTHING BUT ABUSE ME.



I REMEMBER ONE TIME THEY MADE ME PENCIL A WHOLE ISSUE OF "CRIME CRACKERS" IN --

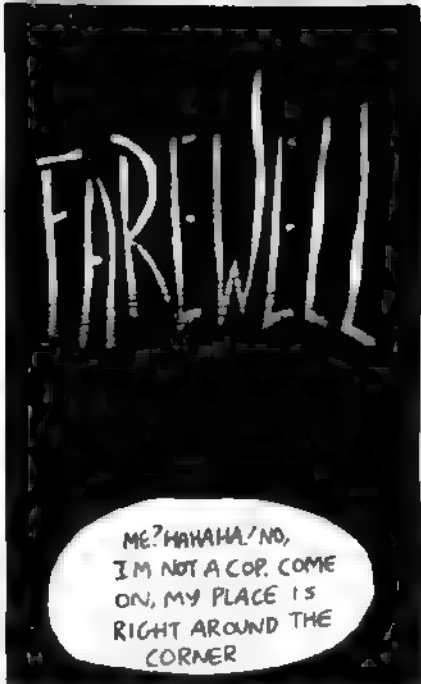
HEYYYY, WAIT A MINUTE!





TWENTY BUCKS,
THEN?

UM.. ARE..
YOU'RE NOT A
UM, LIKE A COP,
RIGHT?



ME? HAHHAH/NO,
I'M NOT A COP. COME
ON, MY PLACE IS
RIGHT AROUND THE
CORNER



UM.. OKAY.



COLD NIGHT,
HUH?

I GUESS.



OKAY! HERE WE
ARE. RIGHT UP THESE
STEPS... FOURTH DOOR..
HOME SWEET HOME!



SO... WHAT DO
YOU WANT, BABY?

WHOA/HEH, HEH!
YOU IN A HURRY?
JUST HOLD ON A SEC
... YOU WANT SOME
COKE?

SURE



SNIFF SNIFF... AHHHHHH..

SNIFF SNIFF...



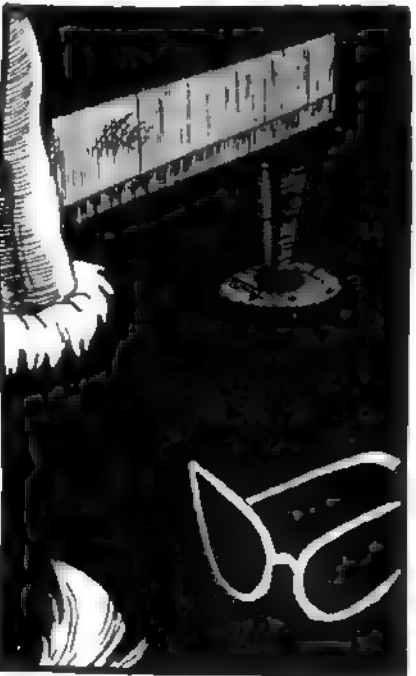
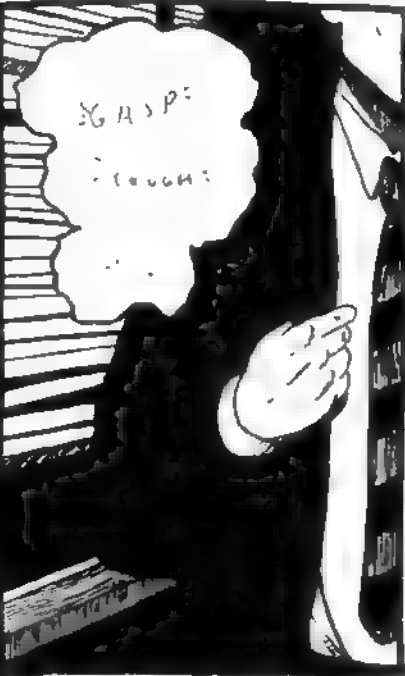
SNIFF SNIFF-- OKAY, OKAY,
NOW STAND RIGHT
THERE, OKAY? NOW
JUST TURN AROUND..
OKAY...

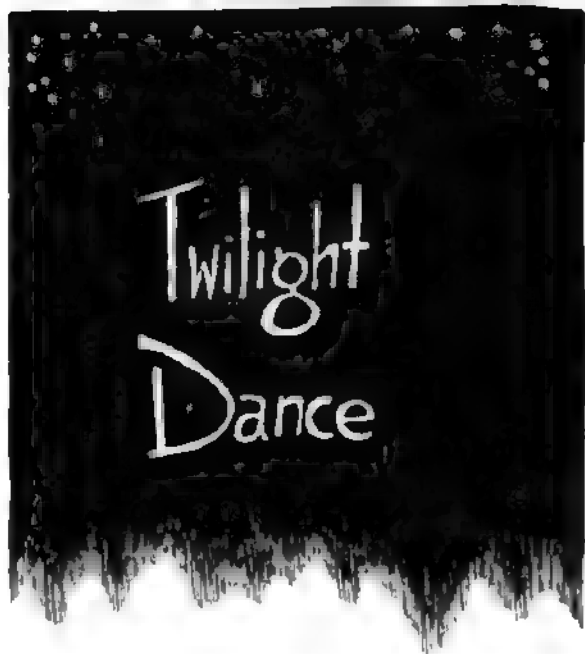
WHAT DO
YOU WANT, BABY?
TELL ME WHAT..



YEAH, JUST...
OKAY, OKAY... DO
YOU LIKE THAT?

WAIT,
WHAT'RE...









YEAH, OF COURSE PART OF ME WILL MISS THE CITY, BUT...

I DON'T KNOW, AFTER SEVEN YEARS IN THIS PEE-PEE SOAKED HECK HOLE WE'RE READY FOR A BREAK, Y'KNOW?

WELL, HE ONLY HAS CLASSES THREE DAYS A WEEK, SO HE'S WORKED OUT A DEAL TO STAY AT CATTON'S DURING THE SCHOOL WEEK.

STEPHEN'S ALREADY TALKED TO A NEARBY STATE SCHOOL ABOUT TEACHING THERE.

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY: ONCE YOU MOVE OUT OF NEW YORK YOU NEVER MOVE BACK...

SO WHAT'S STEPHEN GOING TO DO ABOUT TEACHING? IS HE GOING TO COMMUTE FROM SANITARIA SPRINGS? THAT'S SOME DRIVE!

"PLUS HE'S FINALLY GOING TO START HIS T.R. BIOGRAPHY..."

T.R.? CHRIST STEVE, THE LAST THING THE WORLD NEEDS IS ANOTHER TEDDY ROOSEVELT BIO!

OH! WHO SHOULD I DO, CATTON? YOUR PRECIOUS, POMPUS JOHN ADAMS? PUH-LEASE!

OH, YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! ADAMS ONLY MASTERMINDED THE AMERICAN FUCKING REVOLUTION. HE NEVER SHOT A RHINO OR WAGGLED HIS BIG STICK IN COLUMBIA'S FACE!

YEAH! AND HE NEVER WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, EITHER!

THE FACT THAT THE MOST WAR HUNGRY PRESIDENT UNTIL KENNEDY WON THE PRIZE FOR PEACE IS LUDICROUS!

FELLAS!
FELLAS!

NEITHER OF YOU ALSO-RANS CAN COMPARE WITH THE MOST OVERLOOKED POLITICAL GENIUS OF THIS CENTURY:

UM IS THIS WHERE THE BEER IS?



REALLY



SO HE'S NEVER MENTIONED ME. AT ALL



UM.

NO..

YEAH, SO ELI ZABETH PIERBORNE HERSELF IS GOING TO DO THE STORY.

"INSIDE SCOOP" IS COMING TO GRAND-SEQUON TO FILM MR FLAVOR GETTING HIS BIG AWARD!

WOW, THAT SOUNDS LIKE FUN. I SHOULD TALK HERA INTO PAYING FOR ME TO GO TO THAT CONVENTION.



YOU KNOW, TO PROMOTE MY BOOK AND EVERYTHING

THAT'S RIGHT! I HEARD YOU FINALLY FINISHED YOUR EMMA GOLDBERG BOOK. CONGRATULATIONS!

UH, YEAH. IT'S SUPPOSED TO HIT THE SHOPS NEXT MONTH.

THAT REMINDS ME: SHERMAN TOLD ME YOU GUYS ARE GETTING A PLACE TOGETHER.

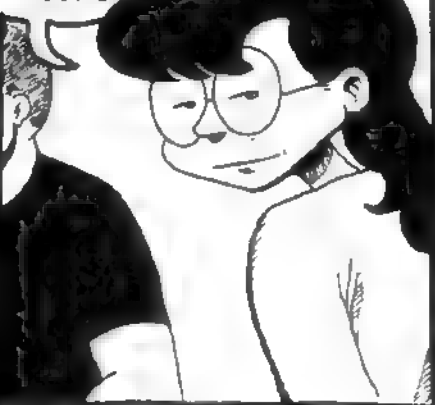
YEAH, WE'VE LOOKED AT A FEW PLACES SO FAR.



BUT THE ONLY PLACES WE CAN AFFORD ARE EITHER RAT INFESTED SHOE-BOXES OR LIKE A SIX HOUR TRAIN RIDE FROM MANHATTAN.

OR BOTH.

SHERMAN TOLD ME THAT DOROTHY TOOK THE NEWS PRETTY HARD. APPARENTLY, SHE THOUGHT THEY WERE GOING TO LIVE TOGETHER.



REALLY?

HUH...HE NEVER TOLD ME THAT. I HOPE I'M NOT MAKING ANY TROUBLE.

OH, PLEASE! THE TROUBLE WOULD BE IF HE DID MOVE IN WITH HER! YOU'RE DOING HIM A FAVOR.



UH! YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME, ED, I HAVE TO MINGLE.











DOROTHY?
WHAT'S GOING
ON? WHAT'RE
YOU, UM,

DOING?

NOTHING

I-

I WANT TO APOLOGIZE
FOR ALL THE HEADACHES
I'VE CAUSED YOU AND
JANE THIS WHOLE
TIME.

I HOPE YOU
GUYS ENJOY YOUR
NEW LIFE IN SARATOGA
SPRINGS AND I WISH
YOU THE BEST OF
LUCK

IT'S JANITARIA
SPRINGS.

BUT THANKS.

HOW COME YOU'RE
NOT OUT WITH EVERYONE
ELSE? I WAS ON MY WAY
TO GET A DRINK. WANNA
COME?

NAH I'M
ALL SET

WANT
SOME?

SPEECH: IT'S BEEN
AWHILE SINCE I'VE DRANK
AND NOW I REMEMBER
WHY...

IT'S FUNNY
THIS PLACE
SEEMS SO
EMPTY

YEAH WE
TOOK MOST OF
OUR STUFF UP
A-READY

"GOODBYE,
CITY LIFE!"

HEY, LET
ME BUM ONE
OF THOSE OFF
OF YOU, HUM?

REALLY? SINCE
WHEN DOES JANE LET
YOU SMOKE?



AHHH, SHE
DOESN'T



ACTUALLY,
I QUIT A LONG
TIME AGO--IN
COLLEGE-- BUT
WHENEVER I
DRINK THE
URGE COMES
BACK



YEAH. SHERMAN
KEEPS HOUNDING ME TO
QUIT. HE'S PROBABLY
RIGHT BUT... YOU KNOW

WELL, HE
IS RIGHT. T'S
A FILTHY HABIT



MMM! LEMME
SEE IF I CAN
STILL...



VERY
EXCELLENT!
LET ME SHOW YOU
MY FAVORITE. EVEN
SHERMAN LIKES THIS
ONE..



COUGH
HEM!

YOU GET
THE IDEA



THE SCENE WHERE
EMMA IS ADDRESSING THE
UNION SQUARE CROWD
WAS FANTASTIC!

Heehee/
THANKS
SIGGLY
CHID?

YEAH, THOSE
CROWD SCENES TOOK
FOREVER BUT I WOULD
AMUSE MYSELF PUTTING
MY FRIENDS IN

I'M SURE
YOU'D RECOGNIZE
A FEW -

OH.
HEY.

RIGHT
WHAT'S ALL
THIS THEN?

AH, NOTHIN'.
WE WERE JUST
TALKING ABOUT SOME
THINGS.

'sa'ff'









WAIT WAIT!
WAIT WAIT!
WHERE'RE
YOU GOIN'?



UM I
WAS GOING
BACK TO THE
PARTY.
LAY DOWN
FOR A SPELL
AND--



OH HHHH! NO!
STAY! STAY!
HERE WITH
ME

C'MON! I'LL FEEL
BETTER'N A LITTLE
BIT. JU'S LAY DOWN
WITH ME FA

COME ON!
C'MERE



SO JANE SAID
YOU WERE PRETTY
UPSET. WHAT'S
THE MATTER?

!PSSSH!
JANE CAN
KISS MY FINE,
FAT ASS!

HEH
HEH
I



I JU'S
DRANG TOO
MUCH
'TSALL

HEY! WHAT
WAS ZAT STORY
YOU TOL' ME?
Y'KNOW?

THE ONE
WHERE Y'
STOLED YER
COUSIN'S DOLL?

SOME
PARTY.
YOU SHOULD
SEE ED! HE--

WHO,
DR. IMPULSE?
HE WAS
NO "DOLL"

NOT ONLY WAS HE THE COOLEST ACTION FIGURE IN A DECADE FULL OF COOL ACTION FIGURES, HE WAS THE ONLY ONE I NEEDED TO COMPLETE MY "SATURNAUTS" COLLECTION...

AND MY COUSIN ANDY WAS THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO HAD ONE

NO WAY!

COME ON! I'LL TRADE YOU BIOTRON

AND MY COLONIAL VIPER

AND MY SET OF YANKEE CARDS!

NO WAY, MAN

BESIDES, YOU TOLD ME YOU'RE MISSING RON GUIDRY!

IT DROVE ME CRAZY BECAUSE HE DIDN'T EVEN CARE ABOUT DR IMPULSE! HE LET HIS DOG CHEW ON IT, HE ALMOST RAN OVER IT WITH A LAWN MOWER-- HE'D LEAVE HIM LAYING AROUND ANYWHERE!

ONE OF THESE DAYS HE WAS GOING TO--

I FOUND HIM (DR IMPULSE, NOT ANDY) LAYING IN THE BACK YARD. ANDY AND MY BROTHER WERE OFF PLAYING IN THE STREET OR SOMETHING

I HID HIM ON A LEDGE IN THE SEWER. I'D GET HIM OUT RIGHT BEFORE MY MOM PICKED US UP

IT WAS THE PERFECT CRIME

IT WAS A STUPID PLAN HOW WOULD I EXPLAIN WHERE I SUDDENLY GOT THIS RARE ACTION FIGURE?

HOW DID IT GET ALL CHEWED UP I DIDN'T TH

SNEEFK!



WHOA, ED! TAKE IT EASY. YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE YOUR FLESH WEAK.

YOU WERE REALLY CUTTING THE RUG WITH THAT FRIEND OF CAPRICE'S. HOW'S THAT GOING?



WELL... URP?

AS LONG AS I KEEP DRINKING I'M OKAY. BUT. UH...

AS SOON AS I START THINKING CLEARLY IT HITS ME THAT I'M, UH, TALKING TO A CUTE GIRL WITH BIG BREASTS, AN' I ... UH...

I LIKE FREEZE UP



AW, COME ON, ED!

JUST BE YOURSELF AND SHE'LL FIND YOU CHARMING.

WHERE'D THEY GO, ANYWAY?



I'M HAVING A GOOD TIME.

I DON'T KNOW. WE'LL SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

I THINK HE, LIKE, LIKES YOU.

I DON'T KNOW

HE'S GOT A GIRLFRIEND, LEE.



PLUS DEREK AND I HAVE BEEN LIKE FIGHTING ALL THE TIME. IT'S REALLY...

Sigh: PART OF ME THINKS I CAME TO THIS PARTY HOPING SOMETHING WOULD HAPPEN SO I WOULD BE PUSHED INTO...

Y'KNOW, SO THINGS BETWEEN US WOULD...

OH! HEY, LADIES! ED SAID YOU WERE OUT HERE. MIND IF WE JOIN YOU?



SURE, COME ON OUT. HEY, CAN YOU BRING US SOME BEERS?



HERE YOU GO! Whew! THIS COLD AIR FEELS GOOD OUT HERE

THANKS.

UMMMM... ACTUALLY, IT'S A BIT TOO NIPPY FOR ME OUT HERE. I'LL MEET YOU INSIDE CAPRICE.

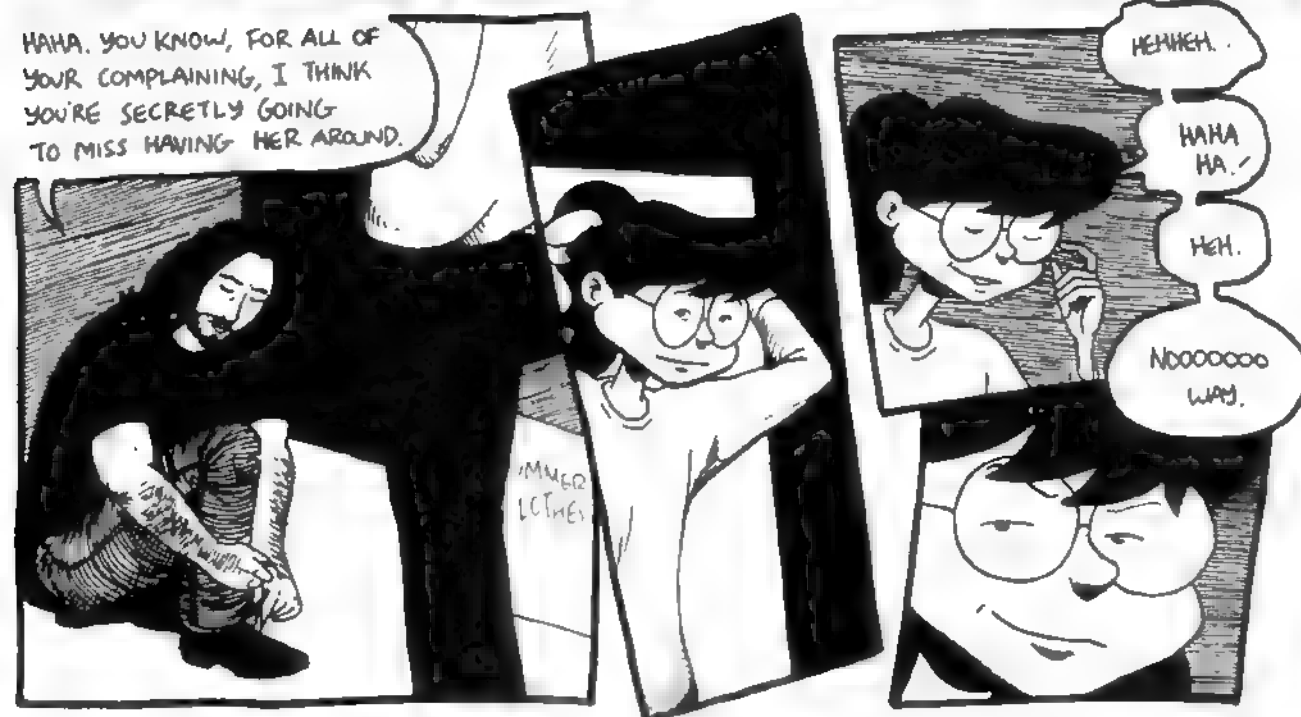


CAN YOU HELP ME IN, ED?

OH, OKAY.

I'LL SEE YOU LATER, LEE









WHAT ABOUT YOU?
DID YOU GO?

THE PROM? JESUS, I
HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT
THAT IN YEARS.

BUT, UH, YEAH.
I WENT TO
MY PROM.

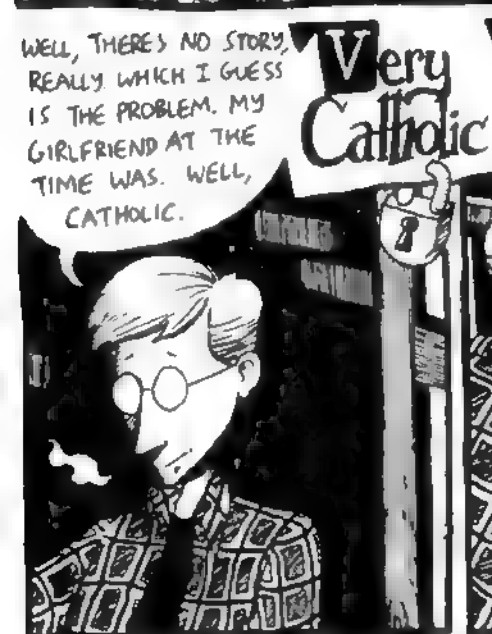


HMM. IS THERE A TALE
BEHIND THE NOTE OF
BITTERNESS I HEAR?

CONFESS
IT, PAL!

STOP! GO
BACK! DON'T
EVEN CONSIDER
IT!

WHAT?
CONSIDER
WHAT?



WELL, THERE'S NO STORY,
REALLY WHICH I GUESS
IS THE PROBLEM. MY
GIRLFRIEND AT THE
TIME WAS. WELL,
CATHOLIC.

Very
Catholic

IF YOU, UH,
CATCH MY, LIKE
DRIFT...

HeeHee./ OH, POOR BABY!
HOW LONG DID YOU TWO
GO OUT?

UHM
ABOUT THREE
YEARS OR SO

you
know



THREE YEARS?! SO WAIT
DID SHE EVER CAME IN?
DID YOU GUYS EVER,
LIKE, UH, CONSUMATE
YOUR, UH

NOPE. PATHETIC,
ISN'T IT? BELIEVE
ME, I TRIED BUT SHE
WAS "SAVING HERSELF."



I THINK ITS KIND OF SWEET/
THAT YOU CARED ENOUGH FOR
HER TO WAIT THREE YEARS

HABA! I
DON'T THINK I
COULD'VE DONE
IT.

KISSING
THIS
GIRL

SO YOU HINTED THAT THERE WAS A STORY ABOUT YOUR PROM?

SOMETHING SPICY, I HOPE? HEH HEH.

LET'S SAY THAT MY DATE, ERIK, WASN'T NEARLY AS PATIENT AS YOU WERE.

BUT THAT ISN'T THE FUN PART, THOUGH

I DON'T KNOW.

I GET THE FEELING SHE WANTS ME TO KISS HER.

NO WAY. WHAT ABOUT DOROTHY?

NO OF US. ALONE OUT HERE. IT'S PERFECT

I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD FEEL LIKE? IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE KISSED A GIRL WHO DIDN'T SMOKE.

JUST ONE TIME DO IT, ASSHOLE!

SHE MADE A POINT OF TELLING ME SHE WAS BREAKING UP WITH HER BOYFRIEND.

WENT ON OF HER WAY TO TELL ME!

WHAT ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND?

CAME TO THIS PARTY WITHOUT HIM.

THE LITTLE PECK

DIDN'T I READ THAT WHEN A WOMAN FIDDLES WITH HER HAIR IT MEANS SHE'S INTERESTED?

BOY, I'M A REAL CLASS ACT, HUH? MY GIRLFRIEND IS PASSED OUT, SICK IN MY BED AND THE FIRST THING I DO IS MAKE A PASS AT SOME GIRL.

SHEER-FUCKING -CLASS-

AT THE TIME OF THE PROM, I'D JUST BROKEN UP WITH THIS GUY, JERRY, WHO WAS LIKE A YEAR OLDER.

HE DIDN'T HANDLE IT VERY WELL. I HAD TO GET, LIKE, A RESTRAINING ORDER AGAINST HIM.

HE WAS LIKE A TOTAL PSYCHO. HE WOULD CALL UP MY HOUSE AND, LIKE, THREATEN ME AND MY PARENTS AND SHIT LIKE THAT. I MEAN HE WAS REALLY CRAZY.

WOW.

VEN KNOW HOW UT WITH HIM IG AS I DID REALLY MEAN.

ANYWAY, SO I GO TO THE PROM WITH THIS GUY, ERIK. EVERYTHING'S GOING GREAT. WE'RE AT THE RAMADA AND DANCING AND ALL.

SUDDENLY, I SEE JERRY COME IN TO THE, LIKE, HALL!

UH HUH.

ILLED THE COPS
AN OUT.

SO AFTER THAT, ERIK WAS
A LITTLE RATTLED, BUT WE
ALL JUST WENT ON WITH
THE NIGHT

OKAY, SO AT OUR
TABLE WAS THIS GIRL
JOANIE, WHO WAS ERIK'S
FRIEND'S DATE. SO SHE WAS
REALLY FREAKED OUT!

SO BY THAT TIME WE WERE
ALL REALLY, LIKE, WASTED, SO
WE PILED INTO THE LIMO TO
GO TO DENNY'S.

Wow! SO WHAT
DID YOU DO?
JEEZ!

OKAY! OKAY!
I WON'T DO
ANYTHING.

STILL.

WOULDN'T IT
FEEL NICE?

STO
THINKING
MUCH AND JUST
DO IT!

ED BE
SEVENTH
ONE

I
CAN'T

TASTE OF
BEER.

WARM LIPS.
I WONDER HOW
SHE'S GOING TO KISS.

GENTLY
OPEN HER
MOUTH

LITTLE
TONGUE.

BACKST

WE WOULD JUST
HAVE THAT ONE KISS,
THEN I WOULD STOP!
I SWEAR!

THE GOOD
ONE!

I'LL BET
SHE'S A GREAT
KISSER

I CAN'T
A VIRGIN? IT DOESN'T
SOUND LIKE IT

WHOA! WAIT
A SECOND! WE'RE
TALKING A KISS HERE!
LET'S NOT GET
CRAZY.!!

WHY
FUCK NOT? LET
ME DO SOMETHING
CRAZY FOR ONCE!

BE A
MAN!

YOUR
DRUNK
ACT
LIKE

ACT ON
IMPULSE INSTEAD
OF USING YOUR
FUCKING HEAD
ALL THE
TIME!

TAKE
HER!

JUST LEAN OVER
AND PRESS YOUR
LIPS TO HERS..

NATUR

SIMPLE

THEN MOVE TO
HER CHEEK

THEN DOWN
HER NECK.. TO
HER SHOULDERS..

WHILE SHE'S
TELLING THIS STORY
JUST LEAN OVER AND
KISS

HOW WOULD
YOU FEEL IF
DOROTHY DID
THE SAME
THING?

FEEL SO
GOOD..

WOULD SHE BE
IX OR SEVEN?

IF DOROTHY
KISSED CAPT

WHERE DO
I SIGN UP?

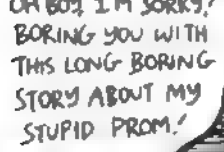
HAVE ANOTHER
DRI

YOU CAN
JUSTIFY THIS ALL
YOU WANT: IT'S A
BETRAYAL.

ET SO
DRAMAT

IT'S JUST
ONE KISS!

THAT'S
WHAT
JUDAS
DID!





WAIT! KAREN!

AREN! FROM SCHOOL!

SHE'S NUMBER SEVEN!

SO CAPRICE WILL BE EIGHT.

WHAT'S RIGHT! I FORGOT ABOUT HER!

EASY TO SEE WHY...

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!!

OH YEAH!

OKAY! NOW MAKE YOUR MOVE!

UH... EXCUSE ME, WHERE'S THAT HAND GOING?

WHAT? NOTHING! NOWHERE!

IT'S A HARMLESS GESTURE OF AFFECTION!

STOP! STOP! STOP!

WHAT IF SHE DOESN'T WANT ME TO? I'M MAKING AN ASS OUT OF MYSELF!

IF SHE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO SHE'D TELL YOU TO MOVE YOUR HAND!

ALL SYSTEMS GO!

THIS IS WRONG! MOVE HAND!

ROCK AND ROLL! KICKING-ROLL!

LESHY BUTTOCKS...

HERE WE GO!

"AND I WOULD LOVE TO TAKE YOU RIGHT HERE AND ALL..."

"CAPRICE WE CAN'T DO THIS! I... YOU'RE REALLY ATTRACTIVE AND ALL..."



YAHOO! HERE GOES...

SORRY...

JESUS EFFIN' CHRIST!

NUMBER EIGHT!

SHIT! THIS IS WRONG!

"CAPRICE, WAIT! I... I CAN'T!"

MY HEART'S EATING IN MY THROAT...

SO EXCITING!

ONE MISS!

FIVE MONTHS?

SIX MONTHS?

HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN SITTING LIKE THIS?

STOP!! PULL BACK!!

THAT'S SCARY!

OR AM I LEANING IN?

MOLLY SHIT!

UT! HERE WE GO!

OH BOY!

IS SHE TREMBLING OR IS IT ME?

DO THIS YOU'LL JUST AS BAD AS FATHER

NOT A DREAM NOT AN ALTERNATE REALITY!

SHIT, I'M REALLY DOING THIS, AREN'T I?

AMN RIGHT YOU ARE!!

"AND I WOULD LOVE TO RUB MY TOWN ALL BODY."

IT'S HUMAN NATURE!

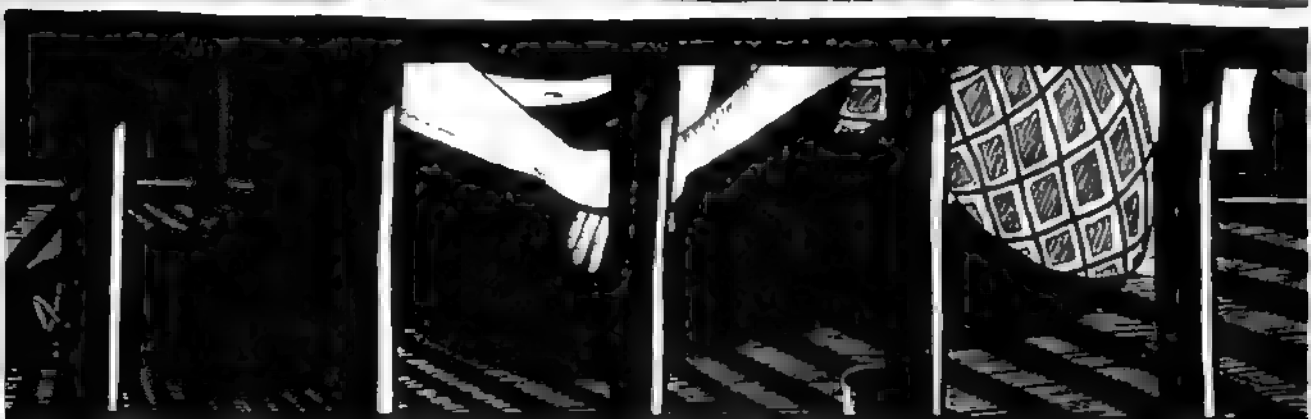
NO, IT'S ASSHOLE NATURE.

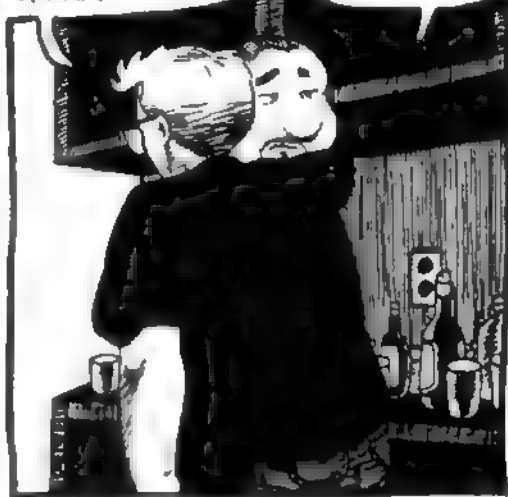
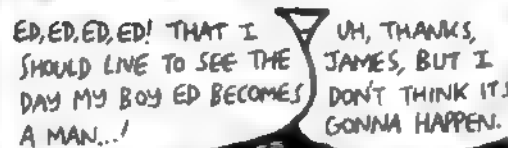
DO IT! THIS IS SO EXCITING!

BREATHE, DAMN!

YOU'RE A GUY! GUYS CHEAT!

WOULD YOU STOP ACTING LIKE A FAGGOT AND JUST KISS HER ALREADY?!









OH, OKAY... WELL I GUESS
WE CAN TRADE.
(I SORT OF
DRANK HALF OF
MINE...)



REALLY? YOU
DON'T MIND?
THANKS.

YOU'RE SUCH
A NICE GUY.

GEE,
THANKS.

ROCKFORD
FILES!
ROCKFORD
FILES!



SO... DO YOU
WANNA DANCE
AGAIN OR
SOMETHING?

SURE, DANCING'S
GOOD... FOR STARTERS.
CHEERS,
BABY DOLL!

Hee
Hee!



SO COME ON,
STUDY, LET'S
GO!

HEH HEH, OKAY!
OKAY! JUST LET
ME...

JUST LET
ME....



DO I LOOK LIKE SOMEONE
FAMOUS TO YOU? EVERY
TIME I RIDE THE SUBWAY,
I FEEL LIKE PEOPLE ARE
STARING AT ME.



REALLY?

I TOLD MY ROOMMATE
THAT AND CAN YOU
BELIEVE HE SAID THAT
WAS CONCEITED?



THAT'S
WEIRD.

I KNOW! I DIDN'T SAY I LOOKED
LIKE A BEAUTIFUL PERSON!
I JUST THINK PEOPLE
ARE CONFUSING ME
WITH SOMEONE ELSE.



?!

YOU KNOW, LIKE
... MADONNA OR
SOMEONE.



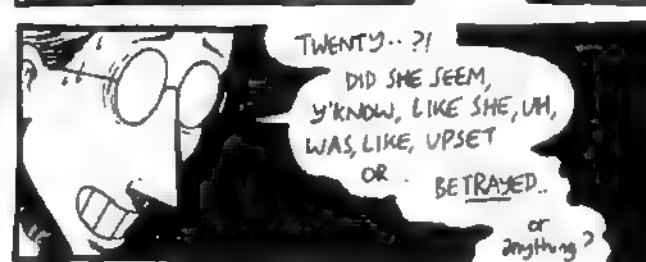


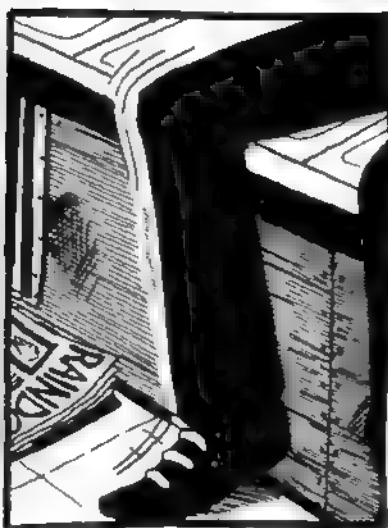












SHE SAW SHE KNOWS.

RELAX IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL.

I FUCKED UP. I THINK I FUCKED UP.

IT WAS JUST HARMLESS KISS / SHE KNOWS

"WHAT? I DIDN'T KISS HER. SHE TRIED TO KISS ME!"

SHE SAW

MAYBE SHE DIDN'T SEE.

MAYBE SHE LEFT BEFORE WE..

IF SHE HAD SEEN IT SHE WOULD'VE BUSTED ME RIGHT THERE!

SHE WOULD'VE BUSTED YOUR HEAD OPEN RIGHT THERE

IF SHE DIDN'T SEE. SHOULD I TELL?

SHE KNOWS

THE MISTAKE WAS NOT FUCKING HER BRAINS OUT!

AGAIN

"I'M SORRY. I MADE A MISTAKE."

NO!

NO!

THROW MYSELF AT HER MERCY.

DENY DENY DENY

HONEST BEST POLICY

"DOROTHY... I HAVE TO TELL YOU..."

"IT WAS JUST A...THING."

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME"

"IT MEANS NOTHING."

DID IT MEAN NOTHING?

I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID IT

"SOMETIMES THE WORLD COULD USE A GOOD SHAME UP."

IT DIDN'T FEEL GOOD

YEAH. A MINUTE OF FUN AND NOW I FEEL LIKE SHIT.

GOOD. THAT'S WHAT YOU GET.

I'M AN ASSHOLE

I'M A PRICK.

A BASTARD.

SWINE

LIAR

DICK

THEATER

WHAT YOU ARE IS A PUSSY! BIG DEAL! YOU KISSED SOME GIRL!

NOW YOU'RE READY TO HAND HER YOUR BALLS ON A PLATTER!

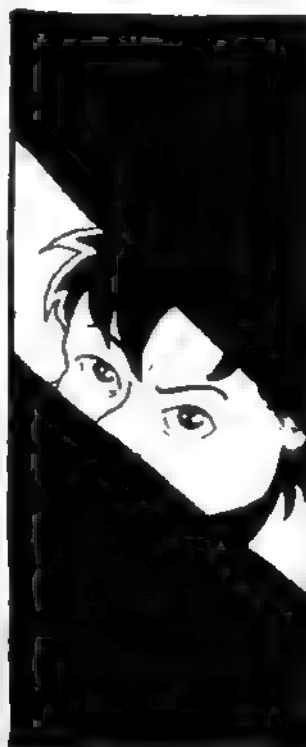
WHAT KIND OF MAN ARE YOU?!

DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH... HOW SHE ACTS.

LIKE CHESS!

DON'T CONFESS UNLESS YOU THINK SHE KNOWS!

I FUCKED UP.





WAKES
WAKES...



GROW:
WHAT'S
UH
GOING
ON?

IT'S SATURDAY MORNING
YOU'RE IN SHERMAN'S BED
(DON'T WORRY, HE'S NOT
IN IT RIGHT NOW).

YOU CAN STAY
IF YOU WANT,
BUT STEPHEN
AND I ARE
SPLITTING.

SHIT. MY MOM'S
GONNA KILL ME.
I GOTTA GET
GOING.



LIKE I SAID,
STAY AS LONG AS
YOU WANT. THERE'S
JUICE IN THE
'FRIDGE.

SO I GUESS
WE'LL SEE...

WAIT! UH.
BEFORE YOU GO,
CAN I ASK YOU
A SORT OF, UH,
PERSONAL
QUESTION?

HEH...
SURE, ED
SHOOT.



SORT OF DANCING
AND SORT OF FEROCIOUSLY
NECKING, YEAH WHY?



HEH
HEH.

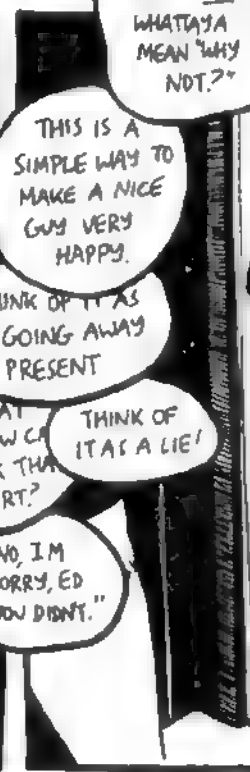
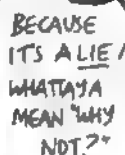
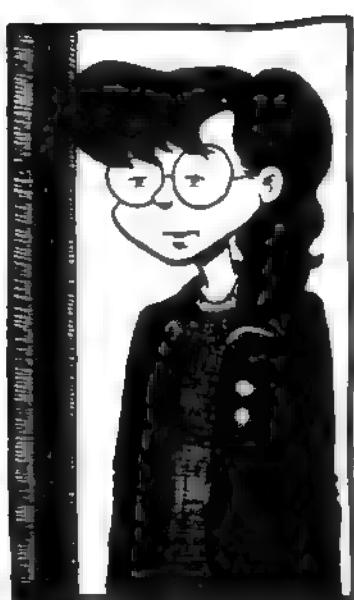


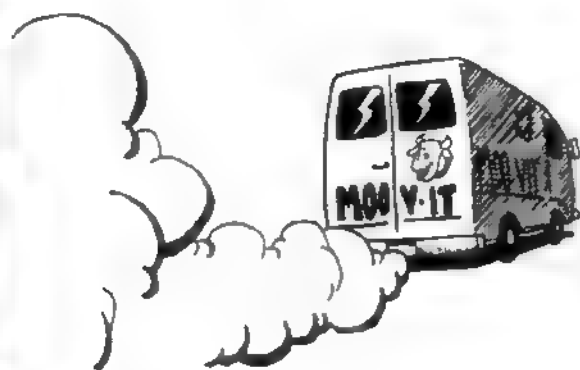
SEE, I REMEMBER THAT
PART, BUT IT ALL GETS A
LITTLE HAZY AFTER
THAT I...

I DON'T KNOW
IF I DREAMT IT, OR
IF IT...

BUT, DO YOU
KNOW IF WE
-- SHE AND I --
UH, DID WE...

Y'KNOW...



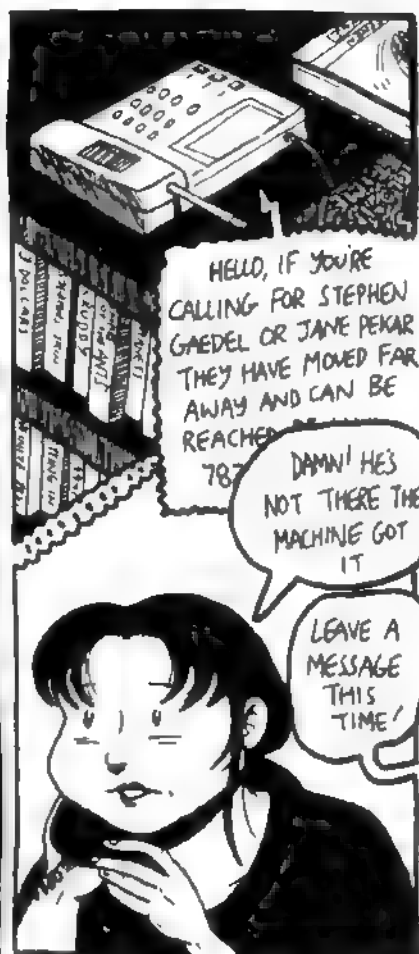


WHAT
WOULD
YOU
LOOK
LIKE
AS THE
OPPOSITE
SEX?





Kiss Off



IF YOU'RE CALLING FOR
SHERMAN DAVIES, LEAVE
A MESSAGE AND, GOD
WILLING, I'LL GET
BACK TO YOU.

BEEP!

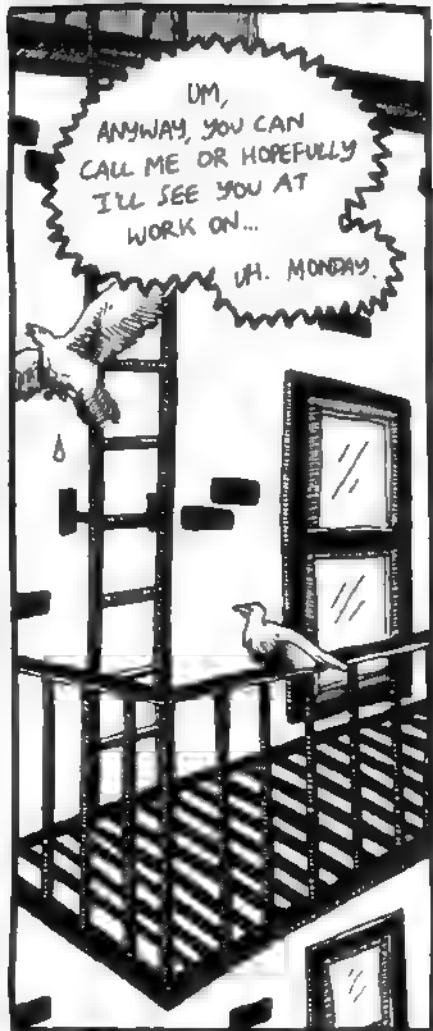


UM... HEY, SHERMAN, THIS IS CAPRICE
FROM THE BOOKSTORE AND I... UM,
JUST WANTED TO SEE IF YOU'RE,
LIKE, OKAY AND EVERYTHING
SINCE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO
WORK FOR A FEW DAYS AND
MAYBE YOU'RE SICK OR
WHATEVER... SO...



UM,
ANYWAY, YOU CAN
CALL ME OR HOPEFULLY
I'LL SEE YOU AT
WORK ON...

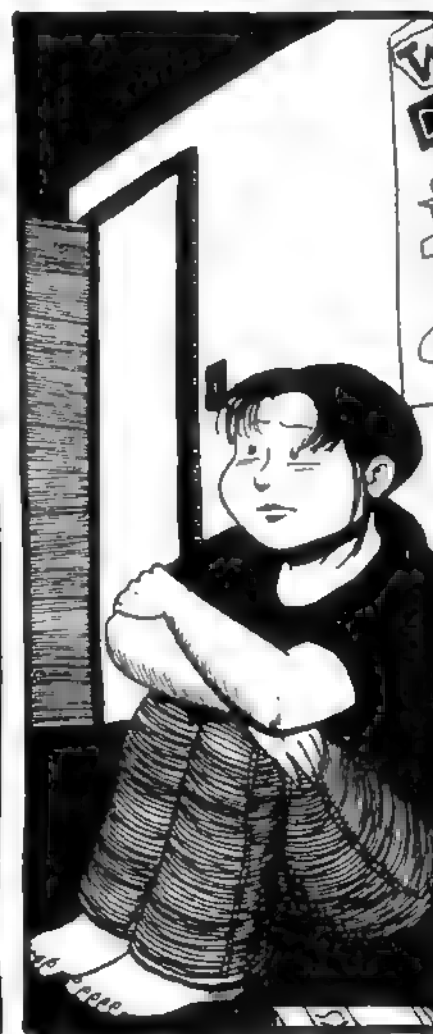
UH. MONDAY.



UM... OKAY.

BYE

CLICK





UM, I'M TOMMY NICHOLSON I PLAYED JAWA #7 IN 'EMPIRE STRIKES BACK.'

OF COURSE! OH, IT IS A THRILL TO FINALLY LURE YOU TO GRAND-SEQUON!

WE'RE ALL FANS OF YOUR GIANT BODY OF WORK! HUGE FANS!



UM. THANKS.



NO, THANK YOU, MR. NICHOLSON! ANYWAY, YOU'LL BE AT TABLE #1138, IN THE MADISON ROOM.

YOU'LL BE NEXT TO IVY SANCHEZ, THE PENTHOUSE PET AND TONY MALLETT WHO PLAYED ENSIGN WILDE ON 'STAR TREK.'



Sigh: THANK YOU.

WOW! JAWA #7!



NEXT! NEXT, PLEASE!

MY NAME IS IRVING FLAVOR
AND THIS IS MY ASSISTANT,
ED VELASQUEZ.



AH! MR. FLAVOR! I'M
SO PLEASED THAT WE
COULD FINALLY LURE
YOU TO GRAND-SEQUON!
IT IS INDEED AN
HONOR!



LET ME SEE... OH, YOU'RE
AT THE "COMICS WORLD"
BOOTH, TABLE #5450
IN THE MCKINLEY ROOM.

WOW! THERE'S A LOT
OF FAMOUS PEOPLE
HERE. ROBBIE GARR
IS THE GUEST OF
HONOR!



ROBBIE
GARR?!

YEAH. HE'S THE
HOTTEST ARTIST THIS
MONTH. I'M SURPRISED
YOU'VE NEVER HEARD
OF HIM.

HE'S LIKE ONE OF
THE RICHEST
WORK...

OH, I HEARD OF HIM
ALRIGHT. ROBBIE GARR
USED TO BE MY GOD
DAMNED ASSISTANT!

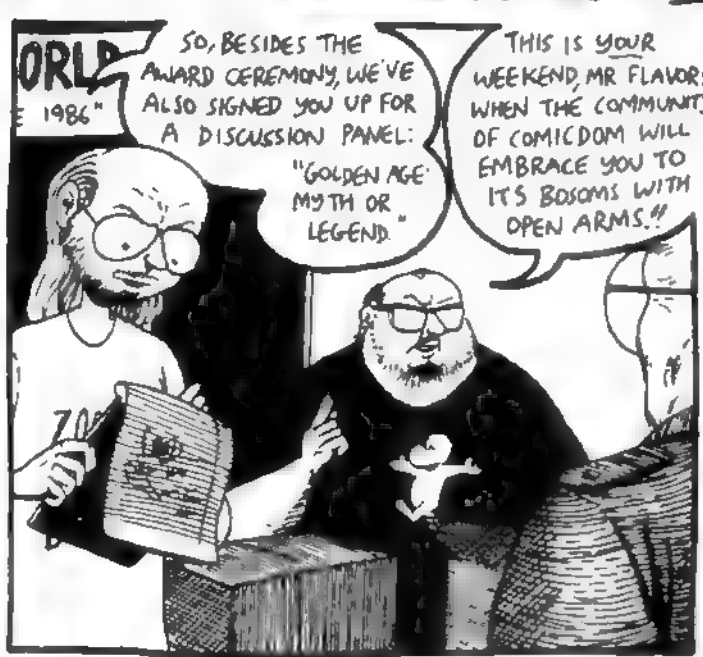
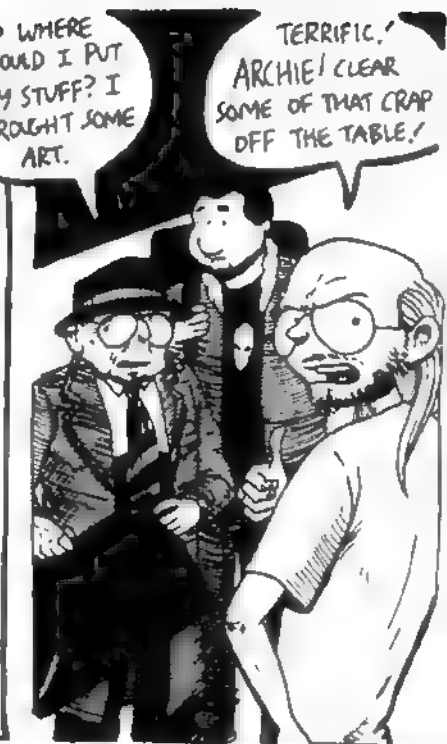
WHAT?
REALLY?

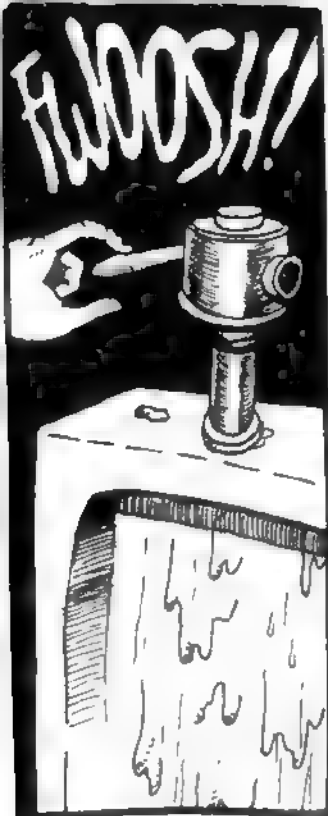
AND LET ME TELL YOU SOME-
THING: HE COULDN'T DRAW FLIES
WITH HONEY! THAT COCK
SUCKER WAS ONE OF THE
WORST GUYS THEY SENT ME!
THAT NO-TALENT SCHMUCK!



SO WHAT DOES MR.
T-SQUARE DO THAT
THEY PAY HIM SO
MUCH?







HUH? OH, YEAH.
ROOM 1213. I
ALREADY BROUGHT
OUR STUFF UP.

OH! I WANTED TO
BRING MY COAT AND STUFF
UP. WHY DIDN'T YOU
ASK ME!

AND BEFORE I FORGET:
YOUR PRESS BADGE.

UH. WHO'S
"RANDY B.
WOODCOCK?"

YOU, MY FAITHFUL ASSISTANT.
UNLESS YOU FEEL LIKE
SHELLING OUT THE \$17
ADMISSION FEE. COME
ON, RANDY, THEY'RE
OPENING UP.

OKAY. KEEP
YOUR EYES OUT
FOR VERISIMILITUDE!

PATHFINDER?

ACCORDING TO
MY CALCULATIONS,
THEY SHOULD BE
THIS-A-WAY

SHUFFLE SHUFF!
WHAT IS
THAT?

OKAY, YOU HERE'S YOUR CHANCE
IDIOTS! TO MEET A LIVING
LEGEND!!



HE "FORGOT?" BUT NIGHTSTALKER
DESTROYED HIS TELEMATRIX ZERO
CONVERTER! HE COULDN'T JUST
"FORGET" THAT! HE WOULDN'T!!



WHAT DO YOU THINK
ABOUT THEM CASTING
JAMES VAN DER BEEK
AS MOONBOY IN THE
NEXT MOVIE? ISN'T
THAT JUST WRONG?

"WIZARD" NAILED
IT: NICHOLAS
BRENDAN IS
MOONBOY!



I TOTALLY SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR
FIGHT WITH ZOOM, MAN!

HEY! WILL YOU
SIGN THIS LIMITED
EDITION HARDCOVER
REPRINT OF "NIGHT-
STALKER" #1?

THANKS
MAN!



DO YOU HAVE
CHANGE FOR A
FIFTY?

I WANT TO GET
LOU FERRIGNO'S
AUTOGRAPH!



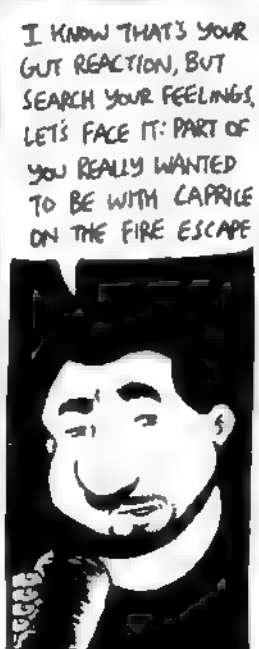
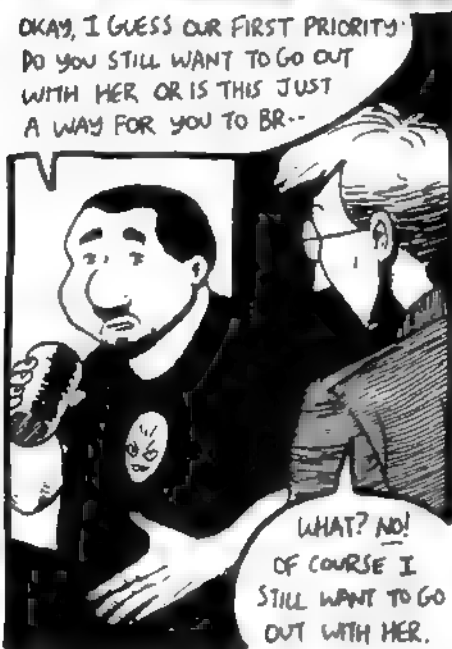
WHAT DO YOU THINK
OF ZOOM FINALLY
SHOWING MOON BOY
AND NIGHTSTALKER
FINALLY DOING IT?

I MEAN,
COME ON! THEY'VE
BEEN "BUDDIES"
FOR LIKE 50
YEARS!









I
LOVE
HER.



DOROTHY?
OR THIS
NEW G...



DOROTHY!
FORGET
ABOUT CAPRICE!!



OKAY/OKAY/ DON'T
YELL AT ME I M
NOT THE ONE
WHO CHEATED
ON--



"CHEATED!" WHY DO
YOU HAVE TO KEEP
USING THAT WORD?!
IT MEANT NOTHING,
OKAY?! SHIT!



SO TELL
ME WHAT I
SHOULD DO

you

YOU
SHOULD TELL
HER.



BUT /
REALLY? WHAT
IF SHE DOESN'T
KNOW? I'LL--



YOU'RE LIKE THE
GUY IN THAT STORY
WHO ALWAYS HEARS
THE HEARTBEAT OF
THE GUY HE
KILLED



ALL THIS GUILT
IS GOING TO GIVE
YOU AN ULCER.

Y'KNOW, EXPLAIN TO
HER THAT IT DIDN'T
MEAN ANYTHING. A
MOMENTARY LAPSE
OF REASON.

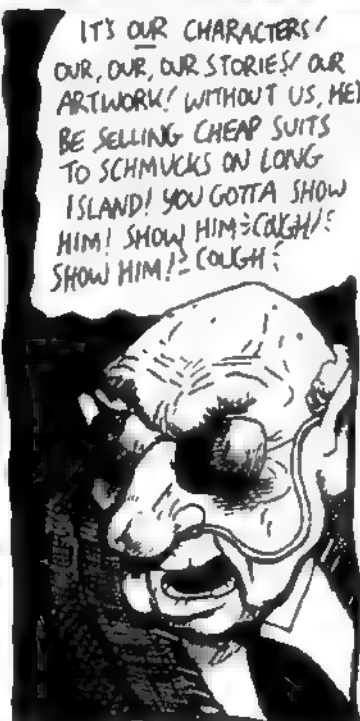
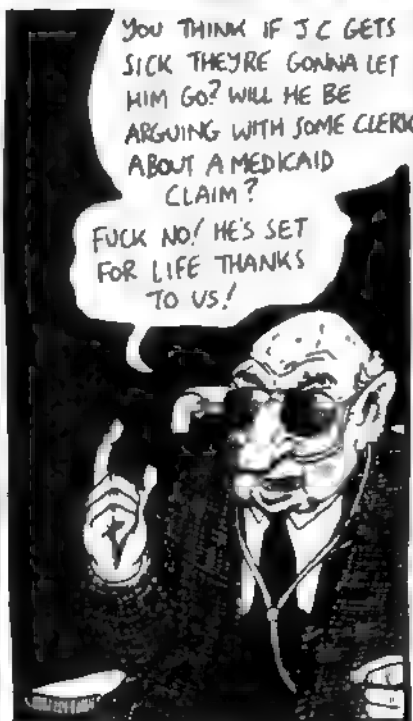
HOPEFULLY,
SHE'LL GET IT.
EITHER WAY,
YOU CAN AT LEAST
SLEEP WITH A...
CLEANER CON-
SCIENCE.



UH, MR. FLAVOR IS ON
THIS DISCUSSION PANEL
DO YOU WANT TO
COME?

UM...
NO.





RELAX, IRV. RELAX
ABE CANT MAKE
IT HES DEAD

YOU'RE . NO
KIDDING?

NOPE
PANCREATIC
PERITONITIS



HAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHA! THE POOR
SON OF A BITCH!



HAHAHAHAHAHA!
HICCOUGH COUGH COUGH!
HEM! I KNEW YOU'D
LIKE THAT



DA'HN, ITS GOOD
TO SEE YOU AGAIN,
CHUCK.



YEAH! THERE AINT MANY OF
US, UH, 'GOLDEN-AGERS'
LEFT ANYMORE.



Sigh: CHRIST,
IRV, LOOK AT US
WHAT THE HELL
HAPPENED?

WHERE DID
IT ALL GO?



AND THIS YEAR'S
WINNER FOR BEST
COSTUME - MALE,
IS.

DANNY
RAXENBERG!

"ENSIGN SHOT
WITH PHASER!"

IF I LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE
FOR COMING AND REMIND YOU
THAT IN FIVE MINUTES, THE
"GOLDEN AGE: MYTH OR LEGEND"
DISCUSSION PANEL WILL BEGIN
IN THE COOLIDGE ROOM.



PRETTY WEIRD
STUFF, HUM?

HMM? OH! *YEAH, BUT
HII!
IT'S PRETTY
COOL, RIGHT?

IF I HAD KNOWN
THERE WAS GOING TO
BE A CONTEST I
WOULD'VE COOKED
SOMETHING UP.
Y'KNOW?

ARE YOU GOING
TO MR. FLAVOR'S
DISCUSSION
THINGY?

I WAS
JUST ON MY
WAY NOW

SO WOULD YOU HAVE
REALLY MADE A
COSTUME?



SURE! DON'T YOU
THINK IT LOOKS
LIKE FUN? DON'T
YOU EVER DRESS
UP FOR HALLOWEEN?

IN THE TWO YEARS
I'VE BEEN HERE--
IN NEW YORK, I
MEAN-- I'VE ALWAYS
DRESSED UP FOR THE
HALLOWEEN PARADE.

REALLY?
WHAT AS?

UM.. FIRST
AS WILMA
FLINTSTONE,

THEN AS A
WOMAN FALLING
OUT OF A BUILDING



WOW. I HAVEN'T WORN A HALLOWEEN COSTUME SINCE AROUND...THIRD GRADE?

WELL, THIS YEAR YOU SHOULD! EVERYBODY SHOULD! EVERYONE SHOULD STOP WORRYING ABOUT WHAT'S HIP OR COOL AND JUST HAVE FUN AND RELAX!

SPEAKING OF FUN, HOW ARE THINGS AT THE MAGAZINE? I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE QUITTING?

OH! PLEASE DON'T MENTION ANYTHING TO HARVEY AND ARCHIE, BUT...



REALLY? WELL, CONGRATULATIONS!

WAIT, SO I GUESS WITH YOU QUITTING THE BUSINESS OUR, UH, PATHS WILL NO LONGER.

WE WON'T BE SEEING EACH OTHER ANYMORE, I GUESS.



WELL...IT DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN THAT. Y'KNOW

HehHeh... I GUESS YOU'RE...

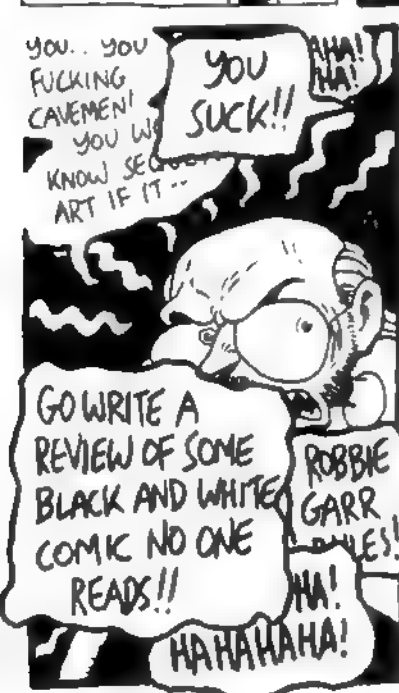
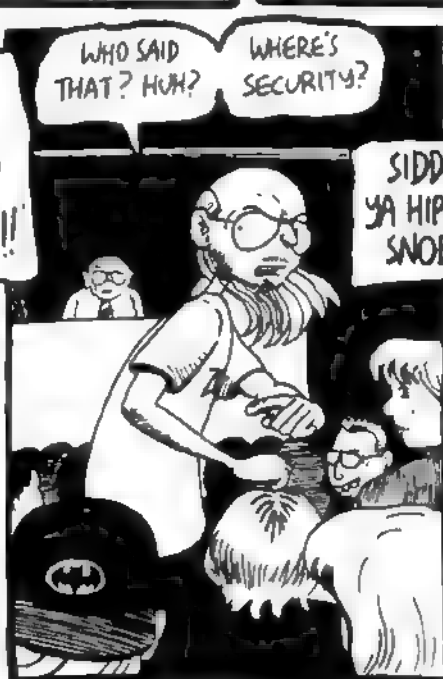
HILDY! HILDY! OVER HERE!

WHERE THE HELL'VE YOU BEEN?

SO... I'LL SEE YOU LATER?

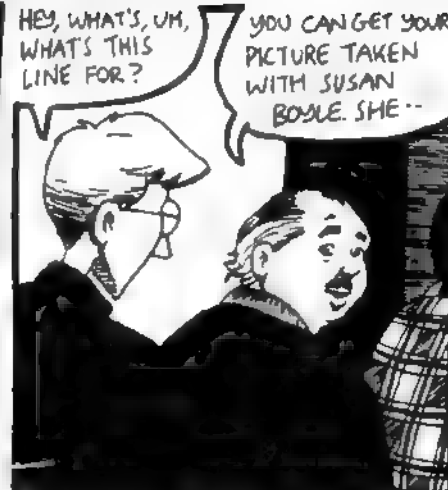
SEE YOU LATER...







ATTENTION CONVENTIONEERS!
AT 4:00pm, WE WILL BE
HAVING OUR POKEMON
CONTEST IN THE
BUCHANAN ROOM!



HEY, WHAT'S, UM,
WHAT'S THIS
LINE FOR?

YOU CAN GET YOUR
PICTURE TAKEN
WITH SUSAN
BOYLE. SHE--

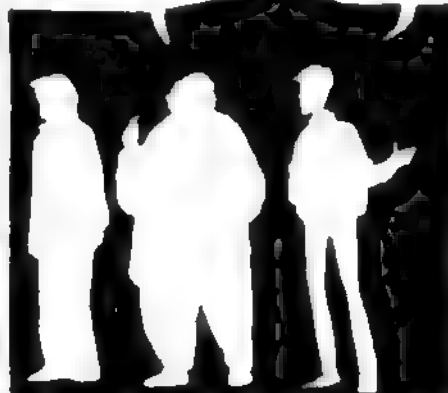


REALLY?/
FROM "SOLAR
PATROL"?/

AH! I SEE FROM YOUR
REACTION THAT YOU'RE
FAMILIAR WITH HER, AH,
BODY OF WORK?

ARE YOU KIDDING?
I HAD A HUGE CRUSH
ON HER WHEN I
WAS TWELVE!

HAHA! YOU AND
EVERY OTHER RED
BLOODED MALE IN
THE WORLD!



DIDN'T YOU JUST
HATE THAT BASTARD
COMMANDER NIXTAQ?

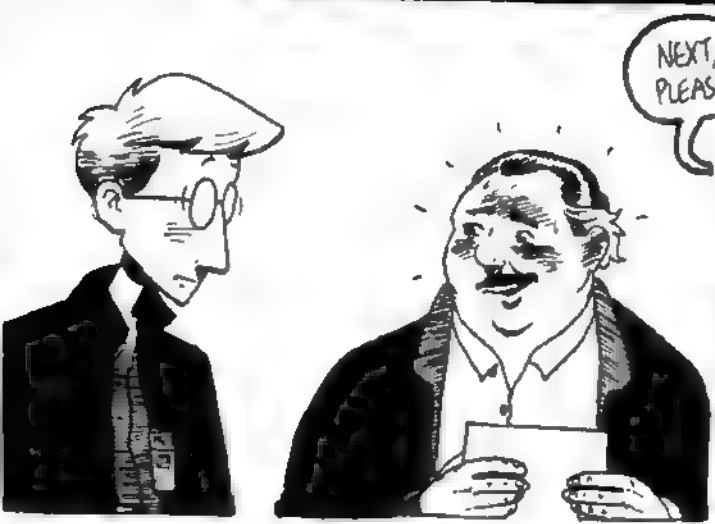
YEAH! HOW COULD
A CUTIE LIKE HER GO
FOR A DORK LIKE HIM?

DO YOU REMEMBER
THAT ONE EPISODE
WHERE THEY GOT
STRANDED ON THAT
BLUE ASTEROID?

AH! "ESCAPE
FROM THE COMET
BEAST" FROM THE
THIRD SEASON!

THAT'S WHEN SUSAN'S
TALENTS BECAME MORE
PRONOUNCED, HMM?

HAAAA! I MUSTVE
MASTURBATED TO
THAT EPISODE 200
TIMES!



NEXT,
PLEASE!



HELLO! I'M A
BIG FAN OF YOU,
SUSAN!

OH THANK
YOU! THAT'S
GREAT!



WHAT-- FUCK!
WHAT IS THIS
NOW? WHO
ARE YOU TO
SAY SUCH
THINGS?



YOU PRICK!! YOU
GOD DAMNED SON
OF A BITCH! I
KNEW IT!

HehHeh...
WHAT I DID
ON
"BUSINESS TRIP"
MY FUCKING
ASS!!

IT DIDNT MEAN NOTHING!
WE-- I WAS DRUNK,
YOU KNOW? IT WAS
AN ACCIDENT!



WHO IS IT?!
THAT FUCKING
BITCH FROM
"BATTLESTAR
GALACTICA?"

SHERMAN!

OR VERUCA
SALT?!



WOW! WHAT
WAS THAT
ABOUT?

I, UM, I THINK I
MIGHT'VE RUINED
SUSAN BOYLE'S
LOVE LIFE.



LT. VENUS
FROM "SOLAR
PATROL?!" WOW!
WHAT HAPPENED?

IT'S FUNNY, I WAS
GETTING MY PICTURE
TAKEN WITH HER
WHEN I ASKED

HER

if...

uh...



IF SHE, LIKE,
UH... IF...

IF SHE GETS,
LIKE, HIT ON, ALOT,
AT THESE SHOWS.

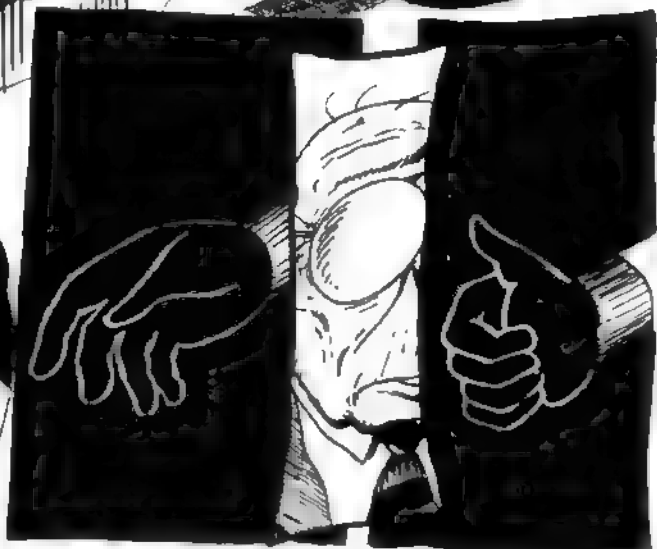
ARE YOU KIDDING?
I'M SURE HALF OF
THESE GUYS WOULD
GIVE THEIR LEFT
NUT FOR A STAB
AT LT. VENUS!

I DONT
KNOW... I
GET THE SENSE
THAT MOST OF
THESE GUYS ARE
LIKE, SCARED OF
WOMEN.

I MEAN, I'VE NOTICED
A BUNCH OF GUYS STARING-
AT MY CHEST, BUT NO ONE'S
EVEN ASKED ME FOR THE
TIME, LET ALONE MY
NUMBER.











TELL US
SOMETHING
YOU'VE
NEVER
TOLD
ANYONE.

I THINK
MY FATHER CHEATED
ON MY MOTHER.



I HAD A, UH,
HOMOSEXUAL, UH,
EXPERIENCE IN
COLLEGE.

ANNNND I
SORT OF LIKED
IT



SEX IS
BORING



WHEN I WAS
A JUNIOR IN HIGH
SCHOOL I ATTEMPTED
SUICIDE WITH
SLEEPING PILLS.



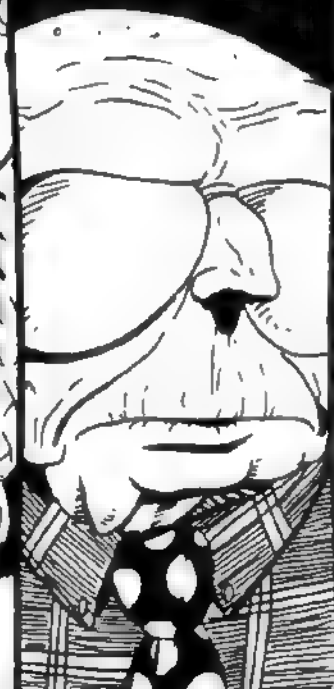
GIRLS WITH
HAIRY ARMPITS
TURN ME ON.



WHEN I WAS
A KID I WAS
TERRIFIED OF
"BIG BIRD."



I RAN
OVER A DOG.



CON-QUEST

THEY ALL
DIED WITHIN
A FEW
MONTHS.

EIGHT YEARS AGO, EVERY
DOG AND CAT IN THE WORLD
... IT WAS LIKE A PLAGUE.

THE DISEASE THAT KILLED
THEM WAS A MYSTERIOUS
VIRUS BROUGHT BACK FROM
OUTER SPACE BY ONE OF
THE ASTRONAUTS.

DIDN'T THE DISEASE
AFFECT HUMANS?

"NO, NO, WE
WERE IMMUNE."

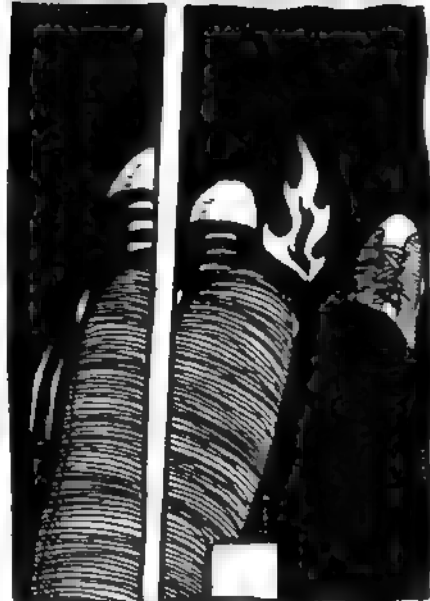
NO, NO. WE WERE
IMMUNE AND SO, IT WAS
DISCOVERED, WERE SIM-
IANS, EVEN THE
SMALLEST ONES.

THAT'S HOW
IT BEGAN

HUMANS WANTING
LITTLE BLAH BLAH
BLAHS TO REPLACE
BLAH BLAH BLAH

BLAH BLAH BLAH
BLAH. BLAH BLAH
BLAHS BLAH BLAH

BLAHBLAH.
BLAHBLAH
BLAHBLAH.



...AND PLAN FOR THE
INEVITABLE DAY OF MAN'S
DOWNFALL!

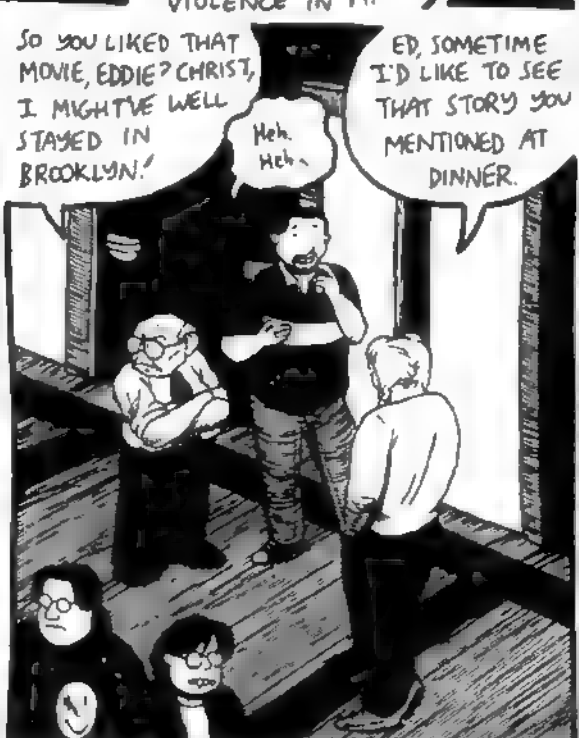
THE DAY WHEN HE
FINALLY AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVELY
TURNS HIS WEAPONS AGAINST
HIS OWN KIND: THE DAY
OF THE WRITING IN
THE SKY!

WHEN YOUR CITIES LIE
BURIED UNDER RADIOACTIVE
RUBBLE, WHEN THE SEA IS
A DEAD SEA AND THE LAND
IS A WASTELAND AND OUT
OF WHICH I WILL LEAD
MY PEOPLE OUT OF
THEIR CAPTIVITY!

AND WE SHALL BUILD
OUR OWN CITIES IN WHICH
THERE WILL BE NO PLACE FOR
HUMANS EXCEPT TO SERVE OUR
ENDS! AND WE SHALL FOUND OUR
OWN ARMIES! OUR OWN RELIGION!
OUR OWN DYNASTIES!!

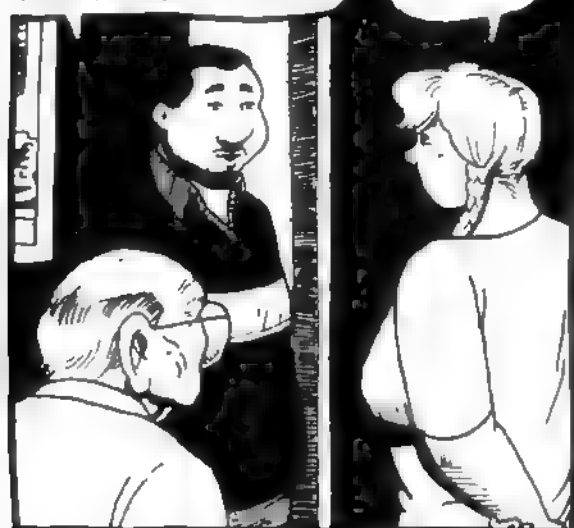
AND THAT
DAY IS UPON
YOU **NOW!**

YOU ARE
WITNESS TO
THE BIRTH OF
THE PLANET
OF THE
APES!



SURE I BROUGHT IT WITH ME TO THE CON SO I CAN SHOW IT TO YOU TOMORROW

OH
OKAY!



OH, WAIT! WHY DON'T I SHOW IT TO YOU NOW?

OKAY!



WHOA, IF YOU GUYS WANNA SOCIALIZE ALL NIGHT, THAT'S YOUR OWN BUSINESS BUT DO IT SOMEPLACE ELSE.

I NEED MY BEAUTY REST, OKAY?



ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT.

HOW ABOUT WE GO TO YOUR ROOM? HARVEY AND ARCHIE ARE AT THE MOVIE, SO--



UMMM
HEY, WHY DON'T WE MEET IN THE LOBBY DOWN-STAIRS?

HAW HAW
HAW HAW!

OH, UN,
OKAY.

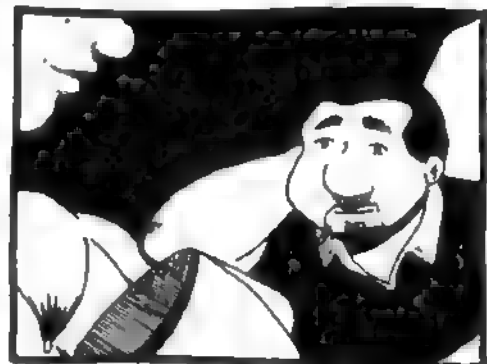


MR. BIGSHOT, YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE GETTIN' IN THAT GAL'S PANTS, RIGHT?

I GUESS SHE SHOWED YOU WHAT FOR, HUM?

WHAT? I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. GO TO BED.





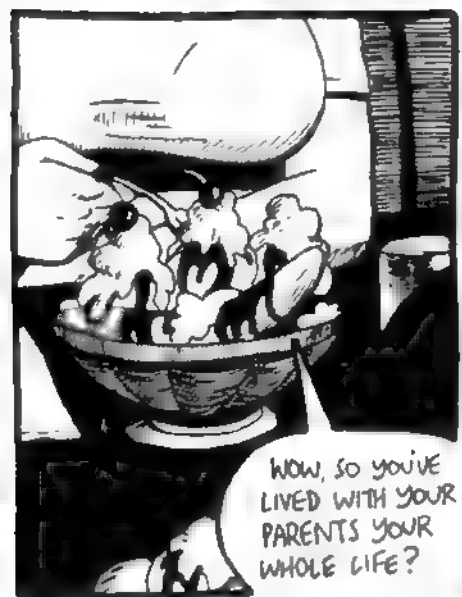
OKAY, YOU KNOW WHAT?
MAYBE I'LL WAIT AND
READ IT TOMORROW?

GOD ONLY KNOWS
I'LL NEED SOMETHING
TO OCCUPY MYSELF
SITTING AT THE
TABLE.

YEAH. MAYBE THAT'S
FOR THE BEST. I CAN'T
STAND WATCHING PEOPLE
READ MY STUFF.

SO... WHAT DO
YOU WANT TO
DO NOW?

HMMMM...



NOW, SO YOU'VE
LIVED WITH YOUR
PARENTS YOUR
WHOLE LIFE?

YEAH. I GUESS
IT'S SORT OF SAD
HUH?

MY PARENTS ARE FROM
COSTA RICA, AND THERE
KIDS LIVE WITH THEIR
PARENTS UNTIL THEY'RE
MARRIED AND ALL.

SO IT MUST BE
SORT OF EXCITING
... AND SCARY, HUH?
THE IDEA OF
MOVING OUT?



BUT, YEAH.
I'M REALLY
LOOKING FORWARD
TO IT.

YEAH, BUT
I'LL STILL BE IN
THE CITY, SO IT'S
NOT LIKE I WON'T
EVER SEE THEM.

HOW LONG HAVE
YOU GUYS KNOWN
EACH OTHER?

MY PARENTS?
SINCE I WAS
A LITTLE KID.

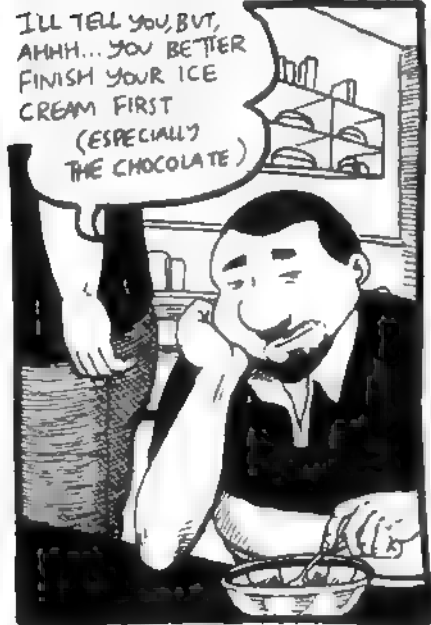
NO, I MEAN YOU AND YOUR
FRIEND, UH... SHERMAN?

"YEAH. THAT WAS... MAN,
FIVE YEARS AGO. OUR
HISTORY TEACHER MADE
US COLLABORATE ON A
PAPER."

HIM? OH,
WE'VE KNOWN EACH
OTHER SINCE COLLEGE.

"OF COURSE, I KNEW
NOTHING ABOUT
HARRY F. TRUMAN
SO HE DID MOST OF
THE WORK."





So did you go to art school or—?

No, actually I majored in business. My dad had aspirations that I would become this, I don't know, business guy. They, my parents, they really aren't interested in my cartooning stuff at all.

Oh, that's really too bad.

Yeah, well. So what about you?

I, uh, was a psych major at Ohio State. I didn't graduate, though. I left after my sophomore year and came to New York. It would be nice to finish up school some time.

You still could. How old are you?

22. What about you? How old are you?

24. I was born on Halloween.

Wow, that's cool. Wait, you were born on Halloween and you don't get dressed up? That's a lowdown, dirty shamer.

Haha. I was born in August, so the sucky part was, remember, like, in elementary school when kids would get to have a party in school and bring in cupcakes and treats and whatever? Since I was born in August I never got to do that.

My cousin Julie was born on Christmas Eve. She really hated that because everyone, y'know, gave her, like, one lump gift for Christmas and her birthday. She always got gyped.

My friend Christine back home was born on December 29 and you know what she would do? Her and her family would celebrate her half-birthday—on June 29. That way, you see, she wouldn't have to compete with Christmas and all that.

Huh. Well, I guess that's one way to do it, I guess.



Oh, look. Have you ever played one of those card games? Like Magic or any of those?

Uh...I bought the Star Wars one at a garage sale but it was way too complicated. I couldn't get past the basic rules. Why? Have you? Do you want to—?

No, no. I've never played one. I was just curious. I used to play Dungeons and Dragons when I was younger, though.

Really? Wow. I thought only, y'know...I just never would've picked you out as, uh...

My older brother's were really into it. It was fun, though. I've always been a fan of fantasy novels and that sort of thing, so it was fun. Have you ever read Jordan Robert's books? Or the Dragon Dreamers series?

Ummm. No. Pretty much the only thing I read is comics.

Really?

More or less.

You don't read, like, novels or anything? You know, like, fiction?

Not really.

Like Stephen King?

No.

I should lend you my copy of Aron's Fury. I think you would like it.

Okay. When did you—Oh my God. Look over by the bar! Wait, don't look—okay, wait: See that, uh, midget? Over by the bar? Ummm.... yeeeeeeaaaah?

He played a Jawa in Star Wars!

He did? Wow. You recognize him?

Yeah, I—well, no not from the movie. I saw him registering for the con. I mean, obviously I wouldn't recognize him from the movie, since you can't really, y'know, see their faces.

Do you want to go talk to him and get his autograph or something?

Huh? No. Nah, I'm sure he gets people coming up to him all the time and everything. He's probably sick of it.

It looks like he's getting along pretty well with that woman. Do you think she knows that he was in Star Wars and everything? Haha.

Do you think she's like a groupie or something?

Yeah, probably. You could probably milk a role like that for a long time. That woman...I could swear I've seen her before.

I wonder what it would be like to go out with a midget.

Hahahah! That's funny.

What's so funny about that?

I don't know. Would you go out with a midget? Have you ever gone out with one? Is that the worst thing you've ever done?

Haha, no. A midget lived in my dorm but she was a girl, so...but I guess I would go out with a midget, if he was cute and nice.

Hmmm. I don't know. It would take some getting used to, I guess. I wonder if she hit on him or he hit on her?

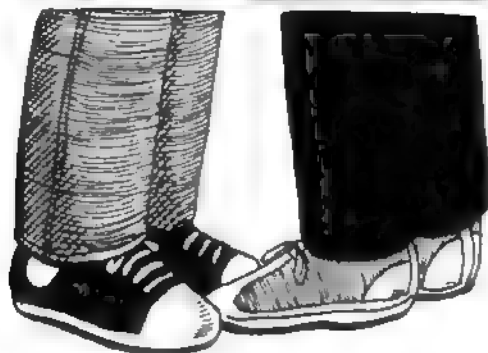
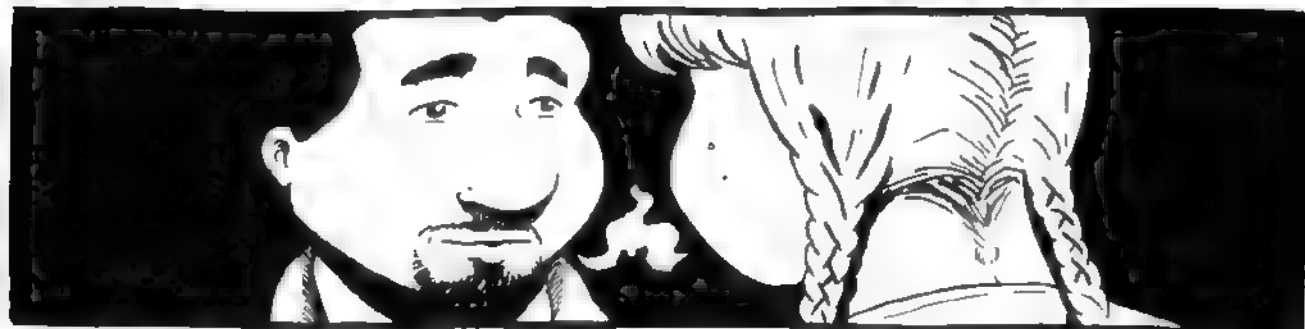
He probably hit on her. You know those movie stars with their big egos and all.



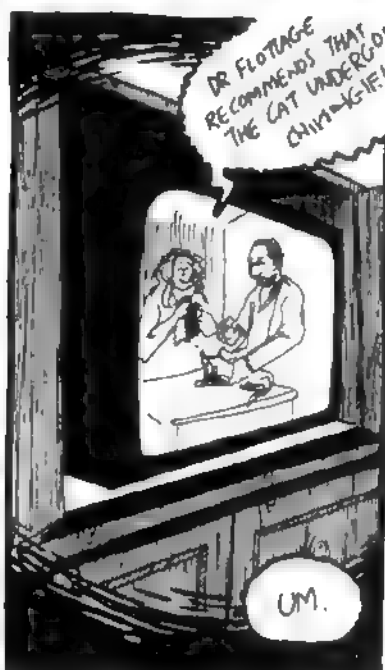












DO
DO YOU REMEMBER
THAT GIRL CAPRICE?
FROM THE
UM
BOOKSTORE?



SKITTLES IS TAKEN IN
FOR ANOTHER BATTERY OF
TESTS WHILE LORETTA
CONSIDERS HER
OPTIONS.

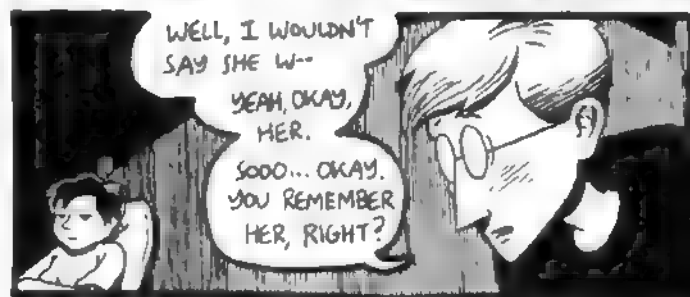


STCH! POOR
KITTY!

NO, WHO--

OH! YOU
MEAN THAT LITTLE
FAT GIRL WITH
THE VOICE WHO
I MET AT
THE PARTY?

WHAT
ABOUT
HER?



WELL, I WOULDN'T
SAY SHE W--

YEAH, OKAY,
HER.

SOOO... OKAY.
YOU REMEMBER
HER, RIGHT?



MEANWHILE,
IN THE RECOVERY ROOM,
SCRAPS FEELS AS GOOD
AS NEW!

ABBEY WILL NEED TO
BRING HIM IN FOR SOME
PHYSICAL THERAPY, BUT FOR
NOW, HE CAN GO HOME
FAMILY.

"WE WERE
REALLY AFRAID
SCRAPS WAS A
GONER!"

"WE'RE JUST
SO GLAD HE'S
OKAY"

OH!
GOOD
BOY!

YEAH, I THINK
WE'VE ESTABLISHED
THAT. WHAT--

UM--
DO YOU
WANT ME
TO WAIT 'TIL
THIS IS
OVER?

IF
YOU WANT
TO WATCH

NO, GO
AHEAD.

I'M . I'M
LISTENING

Pok!



HEY, WAIT. I WANTED
TO SEE THE END
OF THAT.



THAT WAS THE END,
RIGHT? SCRAPS WAS
OKAY AND THEY ALL
WENT HOME HAPPY.
THE END, RIGHT?



YEAH, BUT THERE WERE
TWO OTHER STORIES.
THERE WAS THE
CAT WHO--



I...GAH!! I WANTED
TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT
SOMETHING, OKAY?



WELL. IT CAN'T WAIT
LIKE FIVE MORE MINUTES
OR. IT'S ALMOST
OVER



NO, IT CAN'T
WAIT "LIKE FIVE
MINUTES" OKAY?



GOD!!

FINE, OKAY?
SO WHAT'S SO
IMPORTANT?



WELL



Pok!!



... SKITTLES
DOWN. THE
DOCTOR.

WHILE YOU'RE GATHERING
YOUR THOUGHTS..









BUT... BUT I'M NOT DUMPING YOU.
DOROTHY, I DON'T WANT TO... YOU KNOW.
I LOVE --



OH, OF COURSE! I GUESS IF YOU WANTED TO DUMP ME YOU WOULD'VE GONE AHEAD AND GONE ALL THE WAY AND FUCKED HER, RIGHT?



OH! LUCKY ME! IT WAS A MEASLEY KISS!

IT WAS ONLY A KISS!! IT WAS A STUPID MISTAKE, OKAY??



I'M SORRY!

JEEZ!

WHA--?! I CAN'T FUCKING BELIEVE YOU!! HOW DARE YOU?! YOU'RE GETTING PISSY WITH ME LIKE THIS IS MY FAULT!!



LIKE I'M BEING A BITCH FOR GETTING MAD YOU FUCKING CHEATED ON ME!!



THAT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU SHOULDN'T --

YOU'RE BLOWING THIS WHOLE STUPID THING OUT OF PROPORTION!

IT WAS. NOTHING!

OH, RIGHT, AND I'M SURE YOU WOULD BE...

IF I TOLD YOU I FOOLED AROUND WITH RON FROM WORK, BUT DON'T WORRY! "IT WAS NOTHING!" I'M SURE YOU'D REACT--

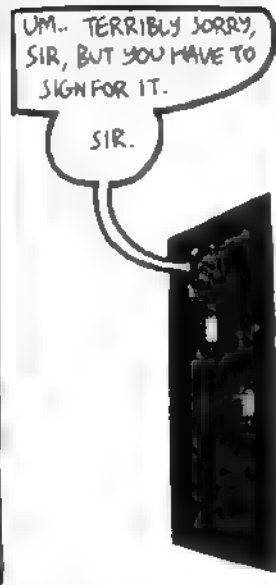


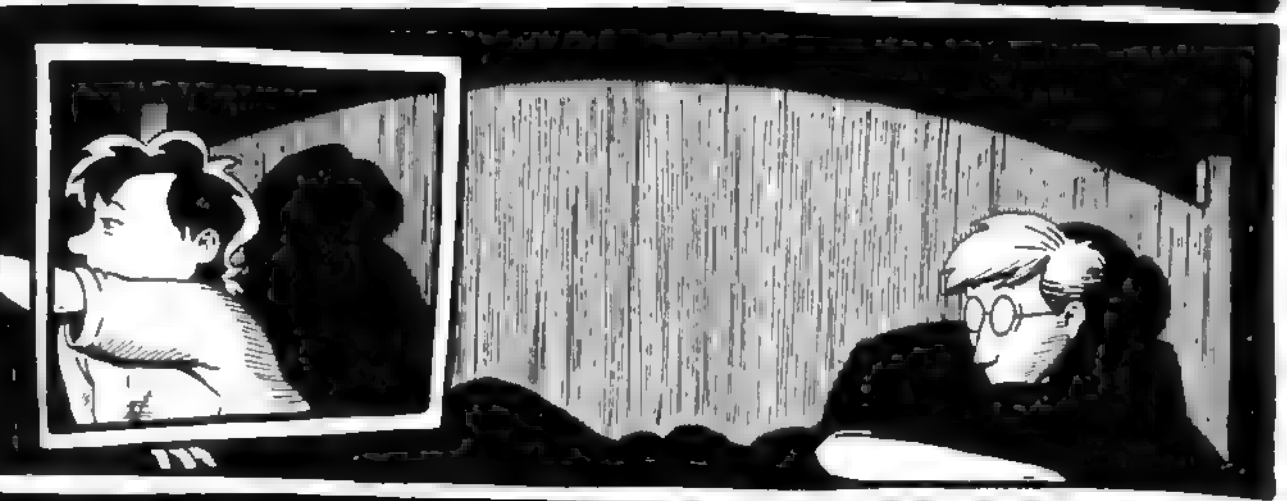
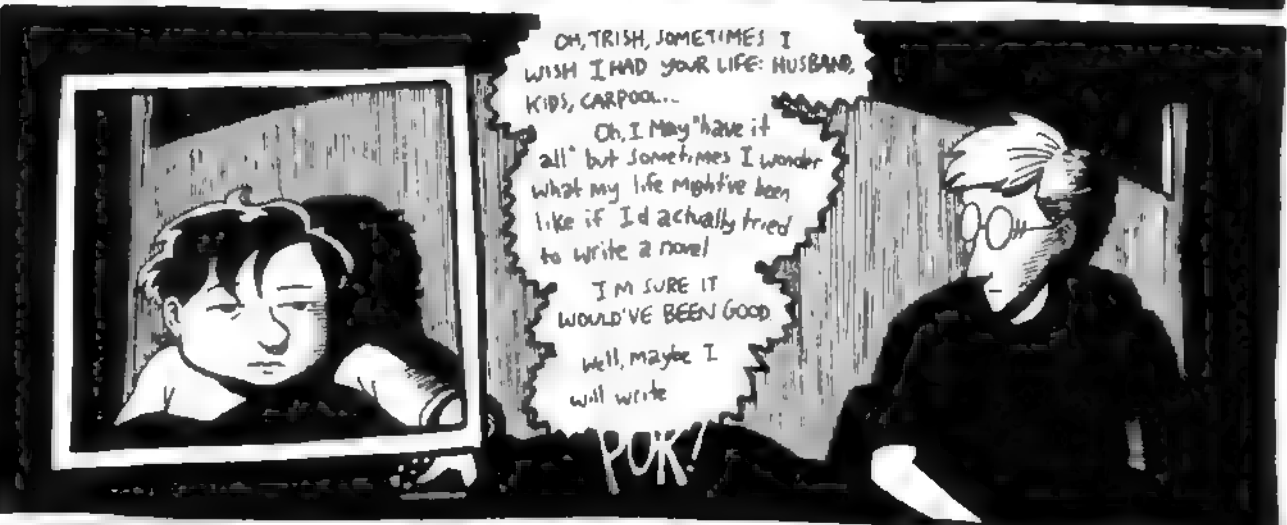
WE DIDN'T "FOOL AROUND!" I TOLD YOU IT WAS ONE KISS! SHUT UP!

KNOCK KNOCK



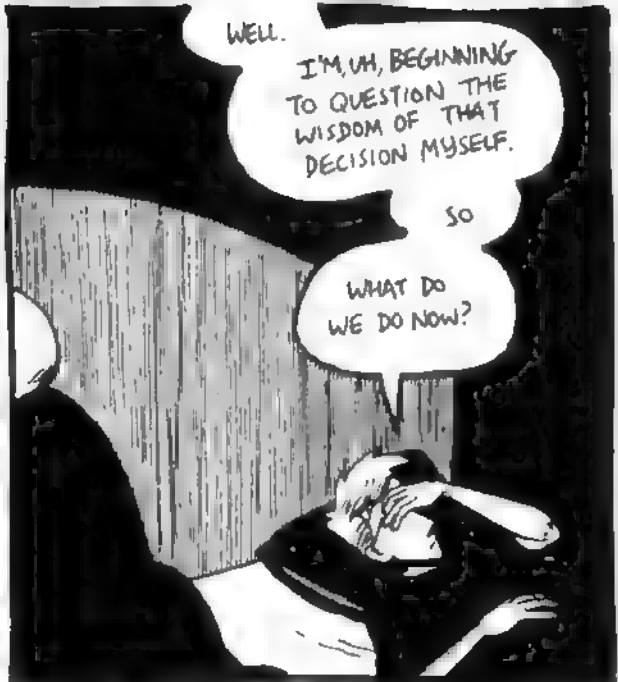
ROOM SERVICE.







Y'KNOW... SHIFF:
I ALMOST WISH
YOU HADN'T EVEN
TOLD ME



WELL...

I'M, UH, BEGINNING
TO QUESTION THE
WISDOM OF THAT
DECISION MYSELF.

SO

WHAT DO
WE DO NOW?



I GIVE
UP:

WHAT DO
WE DO NOW?

WELL...

I GUESS
IT'S UP TO
YOU.

I
MEAN...

LIKE I
SAID



I DON'T
WANT US TO
BREAK UP.



I LOVE
YOU AND WHAT
I DID WAS...
WRONG. IT WAS
A MISTAKE

I... DEEPLY
REGRET IT AND AM
... I CANNOT CONVEY
HOW SORRY I AM.

BUT ..



I DON'T WANT
US TO BREAK
UP, BUT I COULD
UNDERSTAND THAT
YOU MIGHT...
FEEL...

YOU, UM,
I WOULD
UNDERSTAND
IF YOU...

I DON'T
WANT US TO
BREAK UP,
EITHER.



BWWWWT...?



BUT NOTHING. I... I JUST NEED SOME TIME TO... RUMINATE OVER ALL OF THIS.

FAIR ENOUGH.
UM.

WELL, AS LONG AS YOU'RE RUMINATING, THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE I WANT TO...
:ahem:



EVER SINCE THIS WHOLE THING...
THIS IS GOING TO SOUND ODD OR, UM, FUNNY BUT IN A WAY I'M ALMOST GLAD THIS WHOLE THING, UM... HAPPENED.

HOLD ON, HOLD ON. LET ME FINISH:

THE, UHHH, REASON I'M SORT OF GLAD IS THAT IT'S MADE ME, I DON'T KNOW, LIKE RE-EXAMINE OUR RELATIONSHIP AND SORT OUT HOW I...

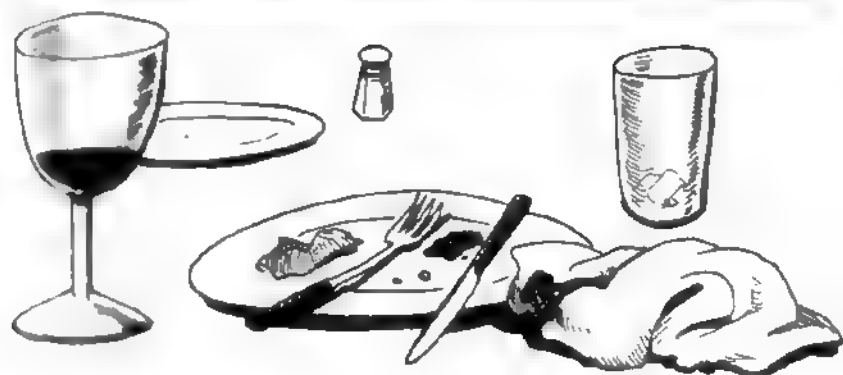
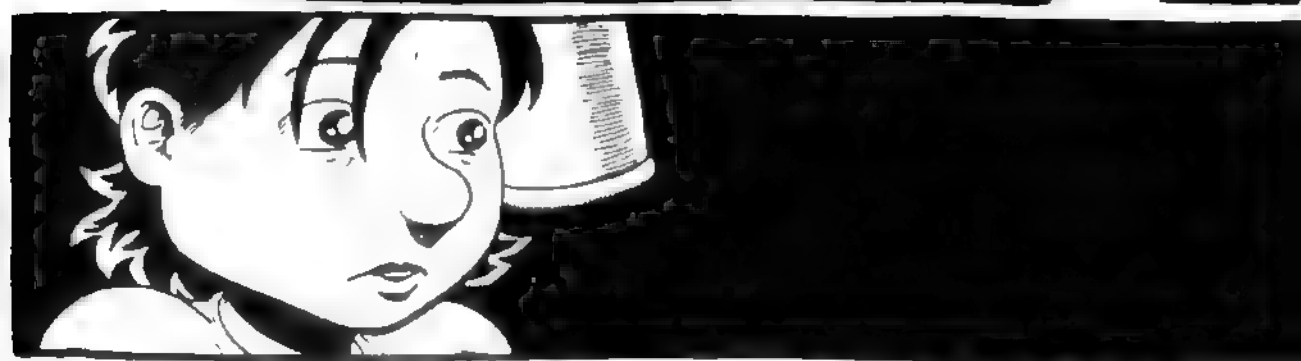
YOU KNOW, HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU AND US

AND, UM,

IT MADE ME REALIZE THAT I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE. I WANT YOU.

I LOVE YOU. I DO LOVE YOU.





OMEN.

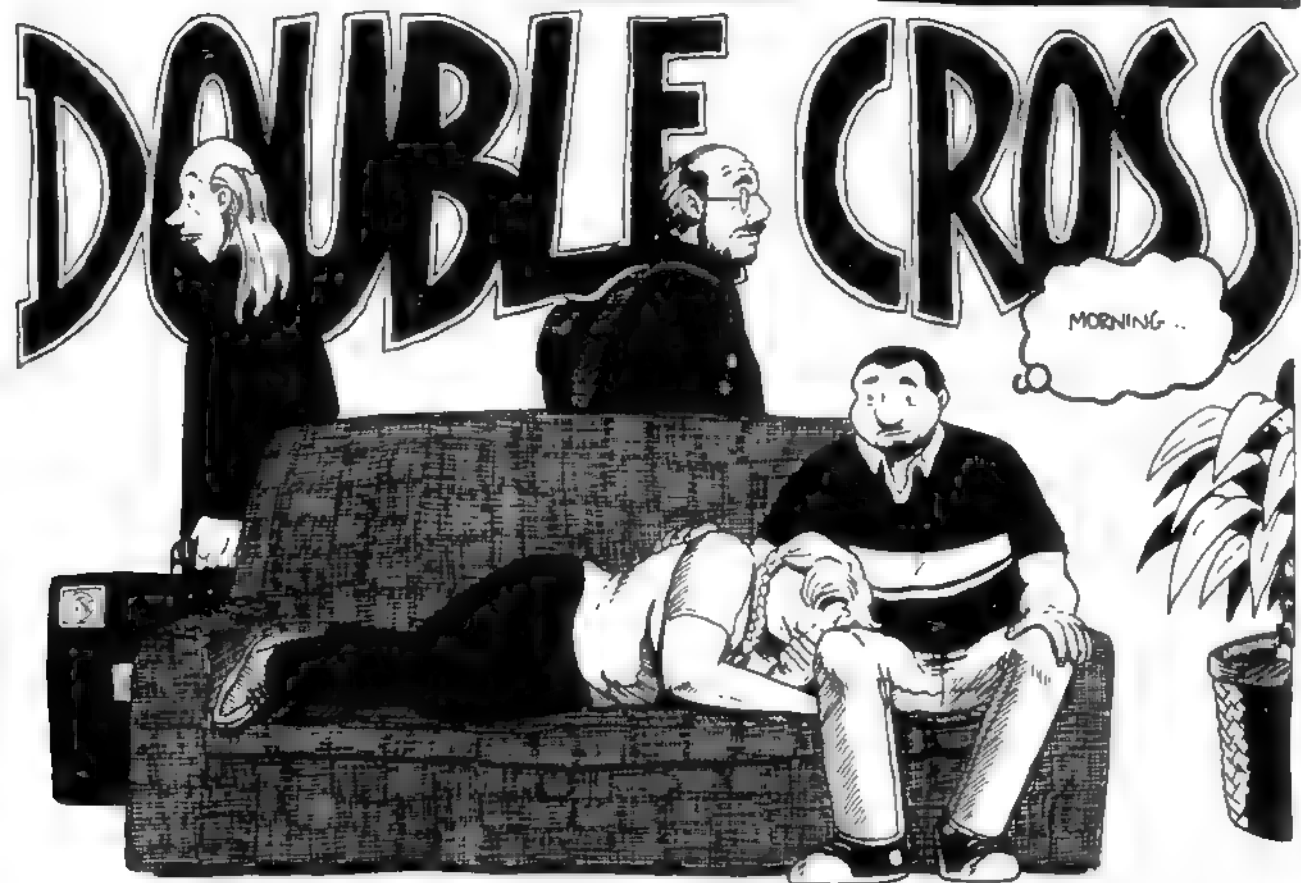


CHRIST, EDDIE!
I JUST HAD THE
WEIRDEST DREAM!

WHAT THE HELL
TIME IS...











BOY, GET A LOAD OF YOU! EVER SINCE THAT PARTY YOU'VE BECOME A REGULAR DON JOO-AN!

MY FRIEND, WHAT CAN I TELL YOU?

I TRADED IN MY VIRGINITY FOR A STRONG, ALMOST HYPNOTIC POWER OVER THE WOMEN.

SKH!
YEEEEUP.



WELL... YOU WEREN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS UP ALL NIGHT.



YOU...

WHAT DID SHE, UH.

SAY?



HEM?

WELL.



OF COURSE SHE WAS ANGRY AND EVERYTHING AT FIRST, BUT I FINALLY CONVINCED HER THAT I WAS SORRY, AND THAT IT WAS WRONG AND THAT IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING.



DID IT?

WHICH IT DIDN'T

SO, UM, THEN WE TALKED ABOUT WHAT WE WOULD DO NEXT, Y'KNOW, DO WE BREAK UP, DO WE TRY TO WORK IT OUT, LIKE THAT.

SOOOO...

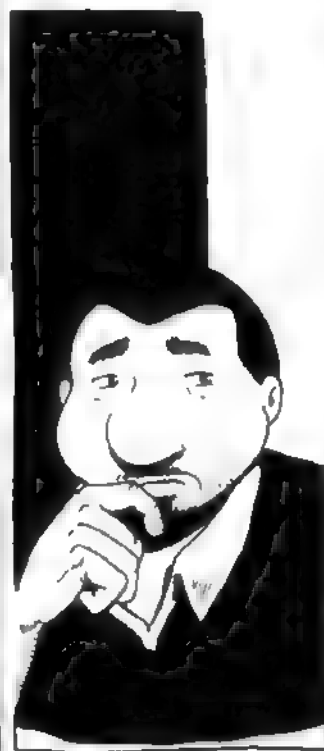


WELL, WE PRETTY MUCH AGREED TO STICK TOGETHER. SO, UH..

TO SORT OF, Y'KNOW, SWEETEN THE DEAL, I SAID THAT SHE AND I SHOULD, UH...

WELL, LIKE,

MOVE IN TOGETHER.



I THINK YOU'RE ONLY DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU FEEL GUILTY ABOUT KISSING THAT GIRL CLARICE. I DON'T THINK YOU--



BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I'M DOING IT.

(AND HER NAME WAS CAPRICE)

I'M DOING IT BECAUSE THIS WHOLE THING HAS MADE ME REALIZE THAT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE HER.
DOROTHY.

I DON'T KNOW... IT'S SUCH A BIG DECISION, THOUGH. WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER IF YOU GUYS WAITED A BIT?



'TIL THINGS, YOU KNOW, CALMED DOWN A SPELL?
YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE A DECISION BASED--

NO, NO, I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT FOR A LONG TIME, EVER SINCE SHE BROUGHT IT UP LAST MONTH. THE THING WITH THIS GIRL JUST SORT OF CONFIRMED-- SOLIDIFIED-- MY THINKING.

I KNOW YOU'RE MAD BECAUSE YOUR PLANS FOR MOVING OUT ARE DELAYED, BUT THIS IS SOMETHING...

IT SOUNDS HOKEY, BUT IT'S PART OF LIFE, YOU KNOW?



YOU MEET SOMEONE, YOU GET TO KNOW THEM, YOU "FALL IN LOVE" AND YOU START, Y'KNOW, BUILDING A LIFE TOGETHER.

NO, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT AND IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

I LOVE HER.

MMMOKAY.



YOU DON'T SOUND TERRIBLY CONVINCED.



YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL LIKE YOU NEED TO CONVINCE ME OF ANYTHING.

NOW, OF COURSE I'M DISAPPOINTED I'LL BE STUCK WITH MY FOLKS A LITTLE LONGER, BUT IT WILL WORK OUT.

BUT I JUST HOPE YOU'RE NOT MAKING A DECISION YOU MIGHT.. REGRET.







"ZOOM COMICS MAKES BILLIONS OFF OF THIS GUY AND THEY CAN'T THROW A FEW BUCKS HIS WAY? THAT'S... THAT'S JUST NOT RIGHT."



"UH... I DON'T KNOW, MAN. NIGHT-STALKER'S COOL AND SHIT, BUT I LOOKED AT THIS GUY FAVOR'S STUFF AND... I DON'T KNOW, MAN, IT SORT OF SUCKED. IT... REAL OLD SCHOOL."

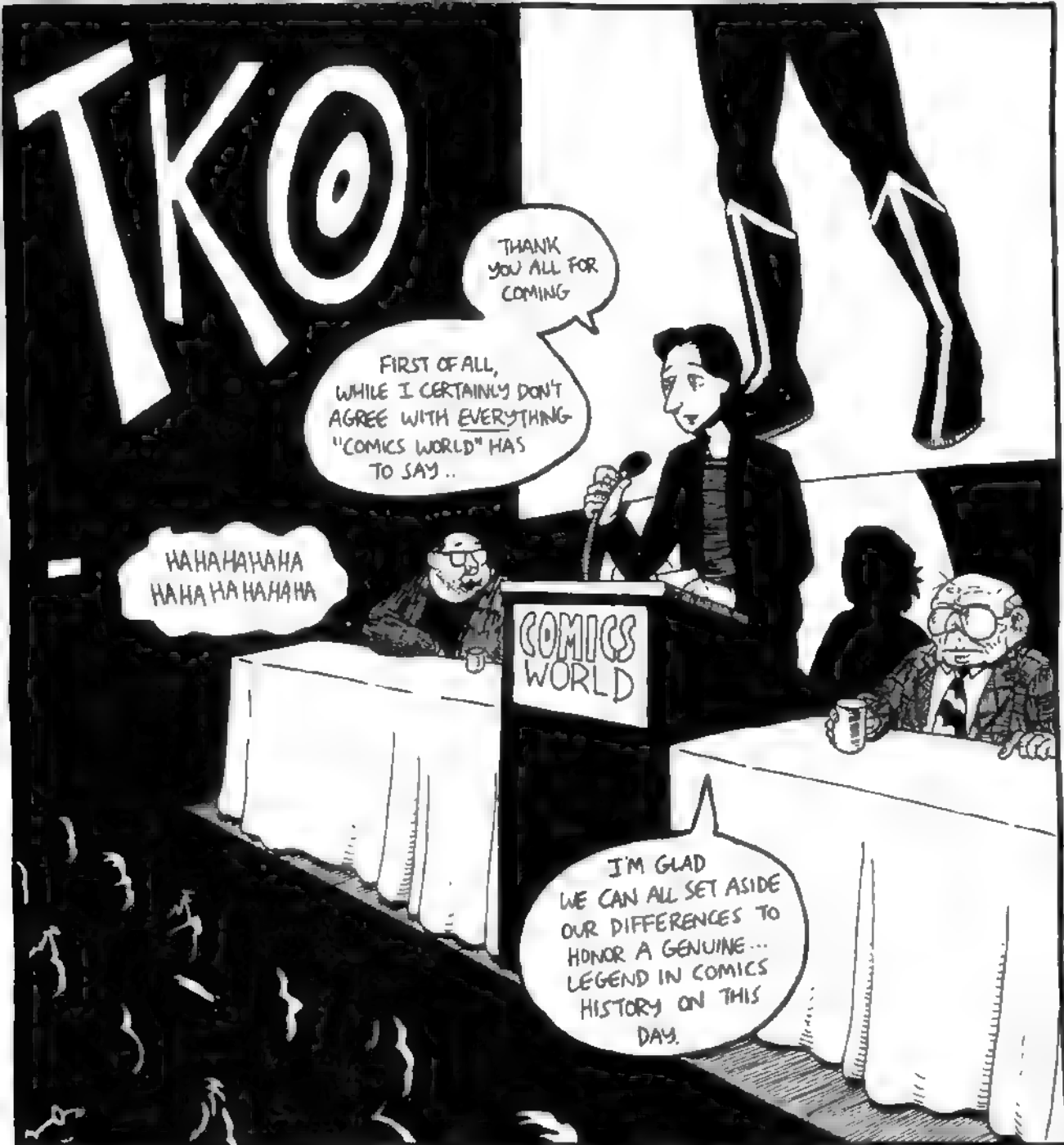


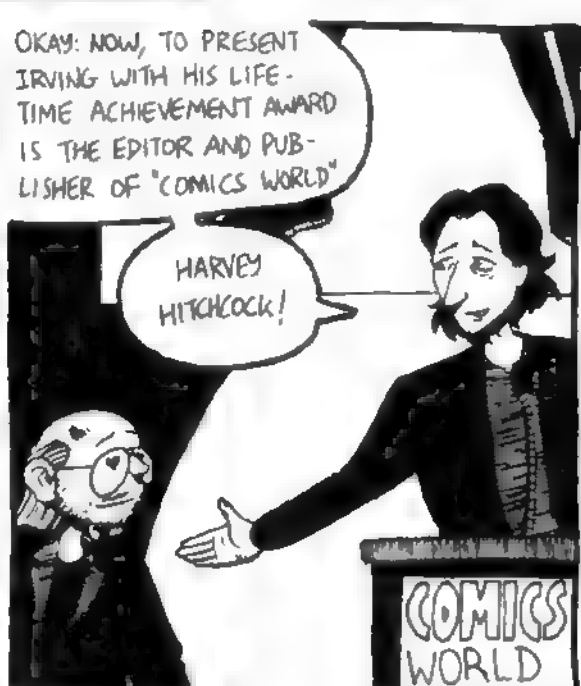
YEAH, OK.

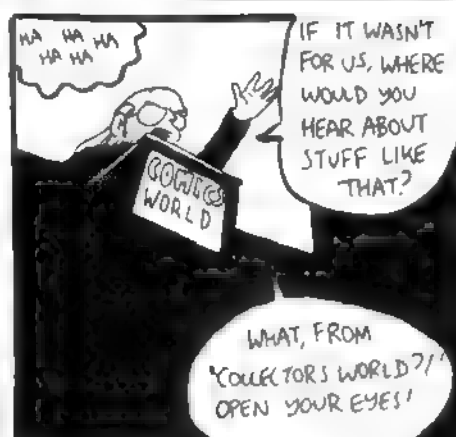
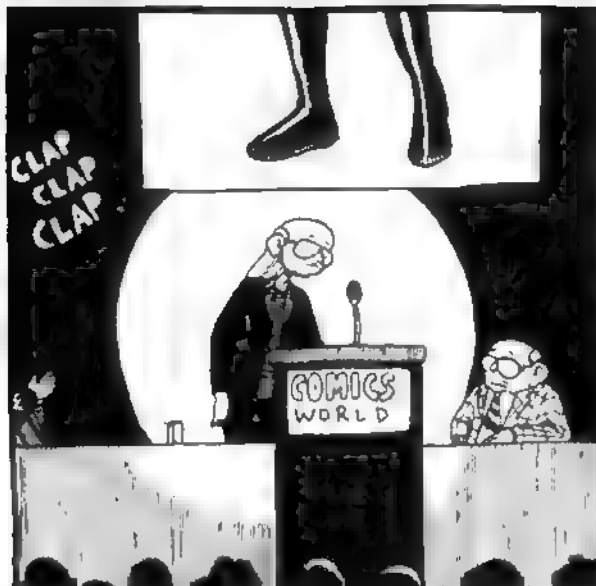


"NOT ONLY SHOULD THEY GIVE THAT FLAVOR MONEY, THEY SHOULD GIVE BACK ALL THE MONEY THEY MADE ON 'NIGHTSTALKER III' 'CUZ THAT MOVIE FUCKING SUCKED."

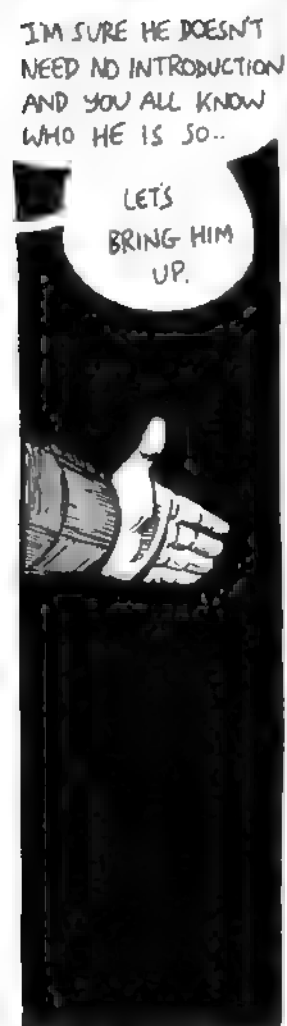


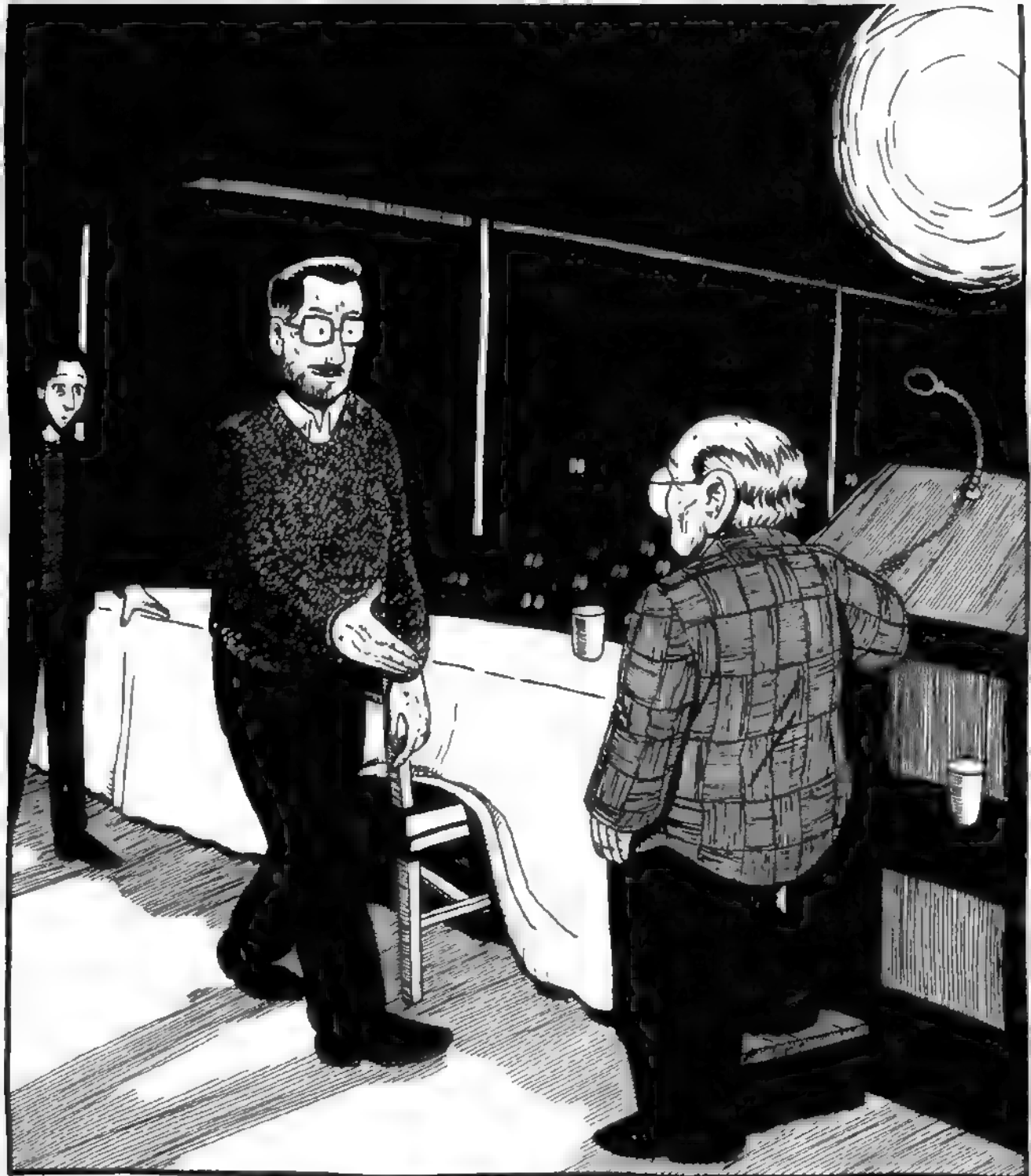














HAHA!
THANK YOU FOR
THAT TUMULTUOUS
WELCOME, O FAITHFUL
ZOOMBIES!



WHOOOO!
YEAHHH
WOOOOO
ZOOM



I AM HAPPY THAT IRV
LET ME JOIN HIM TODAY
BECAUSE I HAVE A BIG
ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE
AND WHAT BETTER PLACE
TO MAKE IT THAN HERE?

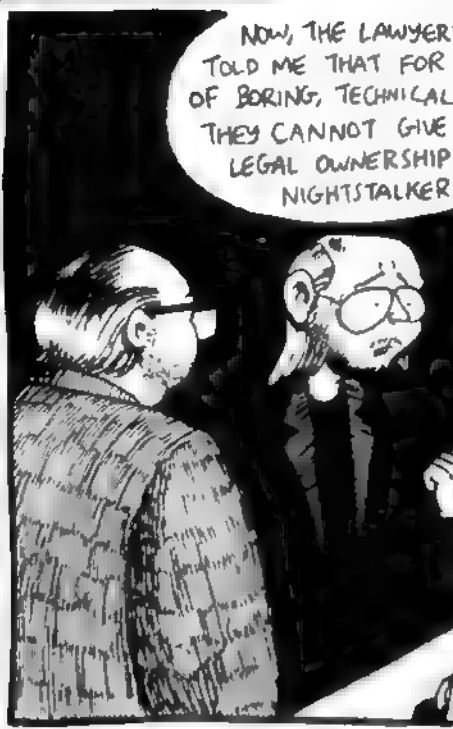


I HAVE HERE IN
MY HAND A DOCUMENT WHICH
WILL END THE... TERRIBLE
MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
ZOOM COMICS AND ONE OF
ITS MOST CHERISHED
FOUNDING FATHERS.

I WON'T GO
INTO ALL THE LEGAL
MUMBO-JUMBO
(I HAD TO HIRE A
TEAM OF LAWYERS JUST
TO TRANSLATE THE DARN
THING!)

BUT I WILL BOIL
IT DOWN TO THREE
SIMPLE WORDS.

WE
WERE
WRONG



NOW, THE LAWYERS HAVE
TOLD ME THAT FOR A BUNCH
OF BORING, TECHNICAL REASONS,
THEY CANNOT GIVE IRV HERE
LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF THE
NIGHTSTALKER.



BUT I FELT THAT WE
HAD TO GIVE HIM SOME-
THING. WE ALL OWED
HIM SOMETHING, RIGHT?

BUT WHAT IRVING
TOLD ME WAS VERY
REVEALING: HE TOLD
ME THAT WHAT HE
WANTED...

MORE THAN
ANYTHING...

WAS TO
WORK.

WHO CAN BLAME HIM?
HE MISSED THE HUSTLE
AND BUSTLE OF THIS CRAZY
BUSINESS OF OURS. HE MISSED
THE FAN MAIL, THE DEADLINES,
THE... THRILL OF CREATION.

OF BEING
AN ARTIST.

I'M ASHAMED
TO SAY THAT I
UNDERESTIMATED
THIS MAN.

ED, WHAT'S
GOING ON?
DO YOU KNOW
ANYTHING ABOUT
THIS?

WHAT? NO,
I CAN'T...

WHY
DIDN'T HE
TELL ME?!

SO TODAY, IN
FRONT OF YOU ALL,
I'M GIVEN THE
RARE CHANCE TO
CORRECT A GRAVE
ERROR.

IRVING, THIS CONTRACT
NOT ONLY GIVES YOU A LUMP
SUM PAYMENT AS A TOKEN OF
OUR ESTEEM FOR GIVING US
THE NIGHTSTALKER...

IT ALSO, AFTER
A TEN YEAR HIATUS,
WELCOMES IRVING FLAVOR
BACK INTO ZOOM'S GALAXY
OF TALENT!

So?

WHAT DO
YOU SAY?



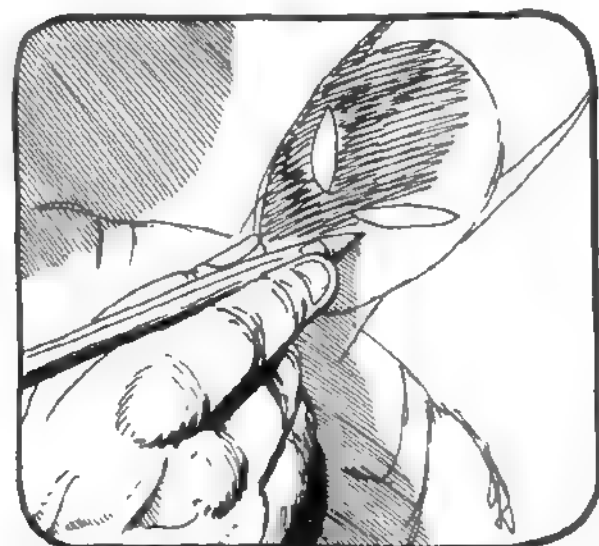
AND 30 YEARS OF BAD BLOOD BETWEEN CREATOR AND PUBLISHER ARE WASHED AWAY, AS THE TWO LOOK FORWARD TO A UNITED FUTURE RATHER THAN AT THEIR DIVIDED PAST.



AND AS THE NIGHTSTALKER WOULD PUT IT, JUSTICE HAS BEEN SERVED. BUT THERE WERE NO VILLAINS IN THIS FIGHT, NO "BIFI! POW! BANG!" ONLY TWO MEN.



AND IN THIS BATTLE THERE WERE NO LOSERS.



IRVING FLAVOR AND J.C. LEBLANC ARE HAPPY TO BE GOING BACK TO WHAT THEY LOVE AND WHAT THEY DO BEST: ENTERTAINING CHILDREN WITH THEIR COMIC BOOK ADVENTURES.



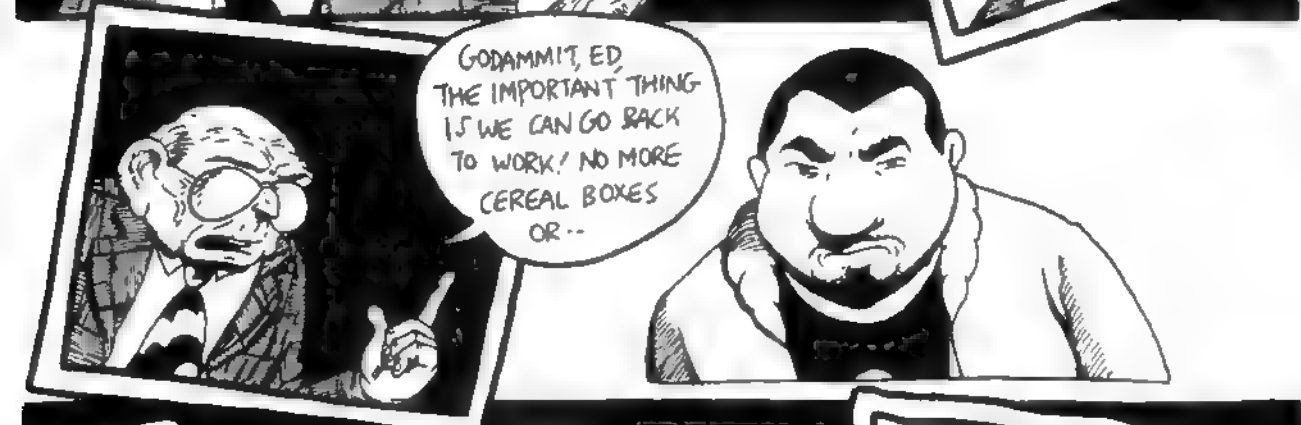
SO FOR ONCE, LIFE IS LIKE A COMIC BOOK, RIGHT? A HAPPY ENDING?

YEAH, I GUESS IT IS



I'M ELIZABETH PIERBORNE, AND THAT... WAS THE INSIDE SCOOP.







THEY
CO

ED, I COULDA
GOT NOTHING!

OKAY, SEE, I
KNOW HOW YOU GOT
THIS COCKAMAMIE IDEA
THAT WE COULDA GOT
TEN BILLION DOLLARS
FROM THEM OR SOME-
THING, BUT WE ALSO
COULDA GOT JACK
SHIT!

LET'S FACE
IT, I DIDN'T HAVE
A LEGAL LEG TO
STAND ON. WE
WERE L

I'M SURE
THAT'S JUST WHAT
J.C. LEBLANC TOLD
YOU, HUH?

THEY PROBABLY
SPENT \$48,000 ON CATERING
THE LAST MOVIE! YOU
SHOULDN'T AT --

WOULD YOU
PLEASE NOT TALK
ABOUT THINGS YOU
DON'T KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT?

THE MOVIE
STUFF IS ENTIRELY
A SEPARATE CONCERN
FROM THE COMIC BOOK
SIDE OF THINGS! ZOOM
COMICS DOESN'T HAVE
NOTHING TO DO WITH
THAT END OF IT!

SEE, THIS IS
EXACTLY WHY I DIDN'T
WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT
IT. I KNEW YOU'D GET
ALL, UH, ALL DIFFICULT.

I GUESS AS
LONG AS YOU'RE
SATISFIED THAT'S
ALL THAT REALLY
MATTERS.

THAT'S RIGHT, CHIEF,
AND I AM 100% NO
QUESTIONED ASKED
SATISFIED, OKAY?

NOW, COME ON,
THOSE T.V. PEOPLE
ARE WAITING FOR
YOU DOWNSTAIRS.

I TOLD YOU
I'M NOT
GOING.

I CAN'T
KEEP WORKIN'
FOR YOU AF

COME ON EDDIE! THIS IS A
ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY!
THIS IS THE TICKET INTO THE
BUSINESS YOU'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR ALL YOUR LIFE!

HAHA! AND BESIDES,
WHO ELSE CAN I GET
THAT WILL WORK
SO CHEAP!

I'M SURE YOUR
PAL J.C. CAN HELP
YOU FIND A NEW
ASSISTANT, MR.
FLAVOR.

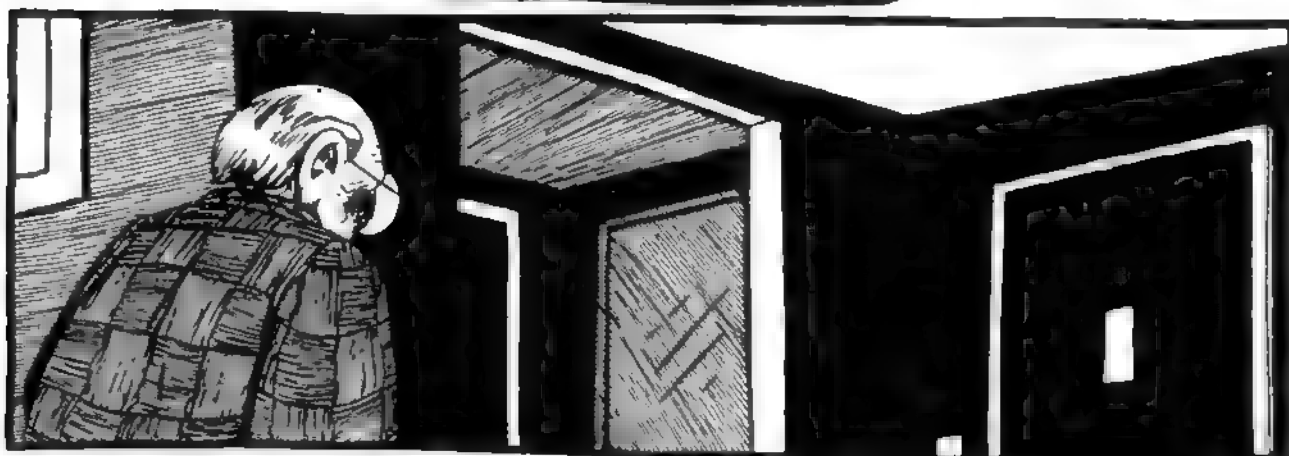
ESPECIALLY NOW THAT
YOU'VE GOT THAT BIG
\$48,000, Y'KNOW?

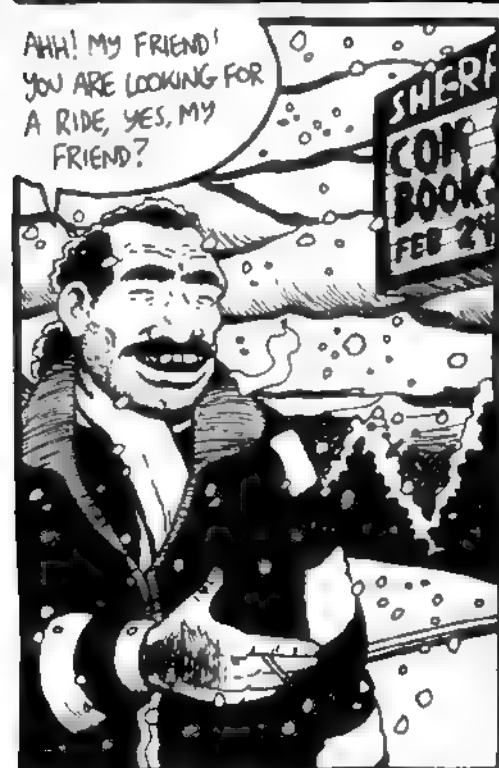
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO, MR.
BIG SHOT?! YOU CAN GO FUCK
YOURSELF, THAT'S WHAT!!

AFTER ALL I'VE DID
FOR YOU!! AFTER ALL WE--
THAT YOU CAN TREAT
ME WITH SUCH, UH,
H-H CONTEMPT

WALK A GODAMN-WAY!
THROW AWAY EVERYTHING
I'VE FUCKING WORKED
FOR, YOU, YOU INGRATE!!

YOU?
I'M THE
WHO SH







WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...?

AFTER THE COLLAPSE
OF THE COMICS INDUSTRY
I WORK IN COMPUTERS,
WHERE I EVENTUALLY
MAKE A KILLING WITH A
SERIES OF HARDCORE PORN
WEBSITES.



I GO INTO
PRIVATE PRACTICE
AFTER MOVING TO
MIDLAND CITY, OHIO.



THREE MONTHS AFTER I GET
HOME I FINALLY RUN AWAY
FOR GOOD. I GO IN AND OUT
OF REHAB A BUNCH OF TIMES.
IF IT WASN'T FOR MY TWO
KIDS I WOULD THROW MYSELF
UNDER A TRAIN, I THINK.



I DIE OF A
HEROIN OVERDOSE IN
THE FIFTH ROW AT A
"JOURNEY" REUNION
CONCERT.



I LIVE IN BREWSTER,
NEW YORK, WITH MY HUSBAND,
BRAD, AND OUR KIDS BRANDI,
CHRISTOPH AND IAN, AND
OUR CHARLES SPANIEL,
SPANKY.



I'LL FINALLY STEP
DOWN AS PUBLISHER OF
ZOOM COMICS. THREE
WEEKS LATER--TO THE
DAY-- I DIE OF AN
ANEURYSM.



I FINALLY FINISH
SCHOOL WITH A MASTERS
IN PSYCHOLOGY AND NEVER
WANT TO SEE A TEXT BOOK
AS LONG AS I LIVE.

ANY CUTE
SINGLE GUYS
OUT THERE?



TONIGHT AT 2:00AM YOU CAN SEE ME IN AN INFO-MERCIAL FOR A REAL ESTATE PYRAMID SCHEME AND NEXT WEEK I'LL ADDRESS A DENTAL CONVENTION IN BETHESDA, MARYLAND.



YO SIGO PATINANDO POR TODO EL MUNDO HASTA QUE CONOZCA A FRANS, UN SAXÓFONO HOLANDES. NOS CASAMOS Y TENEMOS UNA VIDA FELIZ.

UH...IK HOOP DAT JULLIE LANGS KOMEN ALS JULLIE IN NEDERLAND ZIJN, LIEVE VRIENDEN!



I RUN A WOMEN'S RECREATIONAL BASKETBALL LEAGUE HERE IN THE CITY, WHERE I LIVE WITH MY GIRLFRIEND AND HER SISTER.



I MARRY ELDISE, AND WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE A CHILD TOGETHER. LIFE TRULY IS BEAUTIFUL.

SHERMAN AND I NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.



DVANE AND I BREAK UP AFTER JUST A YEAR OF MARRIAGE. I MOVE TO CALIFORNIA WHERE I FIND JESUS AND BECOME MANAGER OF A BANK.



I GIVE UP ON "COMICS WORLD" AND BECOME AN EXTERMINATOR IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK.



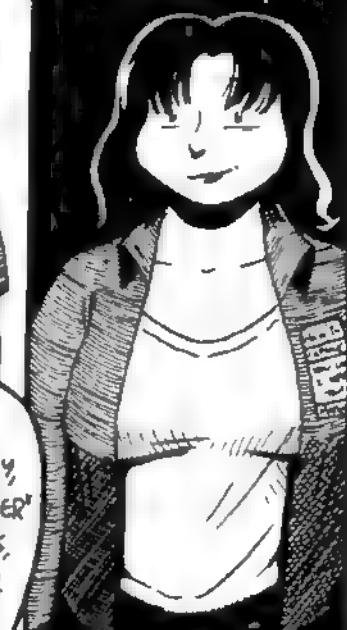
AFTER I AM, UH, DOWN-SIZED BY ZOOM I START TO MANAGE MY BROTHER PHIL'S COMEDY CAREER.



I GET HIM THE ROLE OF MELT-DOWN, THE VILLAIN IN, COINCIDENTLY, THE SIXTH "NIGHTSTALKER" MOVIE. BECAUSE OF THIS, WE BOTH BECOME VERY, VERY, VERY RICH.

I GRADUATE FROM FILM SCHOOL. WHILE I'M A P.A. ON "COUGHING SPELL", A SMALL INDY FILM, I MEET THIS GREAT GUY, NICK. AFTER A FEW YEARS WE GET MARRIED. SOMETIMES.

EVERY NOW AND THEN, LIFE WORKS OUT, Y'KNOW?



EPILUGUE

IT WAS ABOUT FOUR
YEARS AGO THAT IRVING
FLAVOR WENT TO THAT
BIG BULLPEN IN THE
SKY.



I READ ABOUT IT AT SOME COMICS RELATED WEBSITE AND FIGURED I'D OWED HIM THIS MUCH



IT WAS... WEIRD.

THERE WERE ONLY SIX OTHER MOURNERS THERE AT THE FUNERAL. NO ONE SPOKE TO ONE ANOTHER, SO I WAS FREE TO CONCOCT IDENTITIES FOR THEM.

HIS LAST IN A LONG LINE OF ASSISTANTS? A FAN?



HIS LAST EDITOR? SOME LOW LEVEL BUREAUCRAT FROM "ZOOM COMICS" WHO DREW THE SHORT STRAW AT THE OFFICE?



HIS NURSE? HIS NEIGHBOR? A DISTANT RELATIVE? I NEVER DID KNOW MUCH ABOUT HIS FAMILY.

THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM WAS AT A COMIC CONVENTION IN COLUMBUS, OHIO. I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING AND IF HE SAW ME HE DIDN'T LET ON.

I SHOULD'VE SAID SOMETHING. IF I HAD KNOWN WHAT HE'D DONE...





I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT FLAVOR A LOT LATELY, ABOUT THE WHOLE TIME. IT WAS PROBABLY SPURRED ON BY THE NICE SURPRISE I GOT WHEN I DID THAT SIGNING AT "UNCLE AL'S COMIC GALAXY OF FUN, CARDS, VIDEO GAMES AND COLLECTABLES."

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT WHEN I SAW HER!

"WOULD YOU SIGN THIS, MR VELASQUEZ? I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN IN THE WORLD!"



I'D SEEN JANE AND STEPHEN A FEW TIMES AFTER THEY MOVED UPSTATE. I KNOW I SAW THEM WHEN KIRBY WAS BORN, BUT BY NOW IT HAD BEEN--

I WAS GOING TO SAY "TWO" BUT NOW I REALIZE IT'D BEEN CLOSER TO FIVE YEARS SINCE I'D SEEN THEM. FIVE YEARS!

PEOPLE ALWAYS SAY "TIME FLIES" AND ALL THAT BUT IT'S NOT UNTIL YOU HIT A CERTAIN AGE THAT IT BECOMES TRUE-- REALLY TRUE. YOU'RE LIVING YOUR LIFE AS IF NOTHING'S WRONG AND ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU REALIZE THAT "PURPLE RAIN" CAME OUT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO AND TEEN-AGERS SCARE YOU.

IF YOU THINK I'M FULL OF CRAP.. MORE POWER TO YOU!
SAVOR THIS MOMENT.



ANYWAY, JANE LOOKED TERRIFIC.

AFTER THE SIGNING, THE THREE OF US WENT OUT TO EAT (JANE WAS WITH HER... COUSIN? NIECE? I FORGET. IT DOESN'T MATTER BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T SAY A WORD THE WHOLE TIME).

SO ANYWAY, AFTER JANE AND STEPHEN HAD MOVED, HE GOT A JOB TEACHING AT ONE OF THE NEARBY S.U.N.Y. COLLEGES AND FINALLY GOT TO WORK ON HIS THEODORE ROOSEVELT BIOGRAPHY.

JANE'S EMMA GOLDMAN BIO WAS POPULAR ENOUGH FOR HER TO START ANOTHER CARTOON BIO, THIS TIME ABOUT A WRITER CALLED MARY MCCRATHY.

SO THINGS WERE GOING PRETTY WELL. THEY LOVED LIFE IN THE COUNTRY, AND STARTED MAKING ARRANGEMENTS TO BUY THE HOUSE OFF OF CATTON. THEY WOULD MAKE THE LEAP FROM RENTERS TO OWNERS.

THEN... TROUBLE.

I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS, BUT SUFFICE TO SAY THEY WENT THROUGH WHAT'S POLITELY KNOWN AS A "ROUGH PATCH."



THEY'D BEEN TOGETHER FOR ABOUT SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS BY THEN WHAT DO YOU DO?

IN THE MOVIES AND ON T.V. NO DOUBT SOMETHING DRAMATIC WOULD HAPPEN WHICH WOULD MAKE THEM REALIZE HOW MUCH THEY CARED ABOUT EACH OTHER AND TRUE LOVE CONQUERS ALL AND THEY'D EMBRACE AND SMILE, KNOWING THAT EVERYTHING WOULD GO BACK TO NORMAL AS THE CREDITS ROLL AND A VOICE TELLS YOU WHAT'S COMING UP ON THE EVENING NEWS

BUT, OF COURSE, MOVIES AND T.V (AND BOOKS) LIE. THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN.

THERE WAS NO BIG DRAMATIC EVENT. JUST A LOT OF TALKING AND HARD WORK.

THEY WERE NEVER "BACK TO NORMAL" AFTER THAT ROUGH YEAR OR SO, BUT JANE SAYS THAT IN MANY WAYS THEY'RE BETTER. "THE WAY THAT WHEN A BROKEN BONE MENDS ITSELF IT'S STRONGER THAN BEFORE."

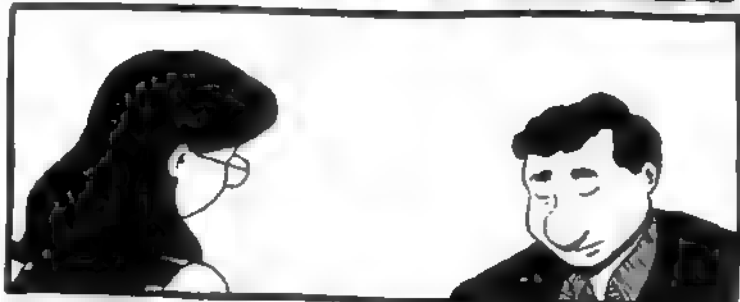
TWO YEARS AGO JANE FINALLY SAID YES, AND THEY GOT MARRIED IN A SMALL CEREMONY IN BERMUDA.

THEY'RE EXPECTING THEIR
DAUGHTER, GWENDOLYN, NEXT MONTH.



I GUESS IT WAS INEVITABLE
THAT SHERMAN CAME UP.

HE AND DOROTHY MOVED IN
TOGETHER LIKE THEY PLANNED. AFTER
THAT... I'M NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED.



I GUESS BETWEEN HIM AND
DOROTHY AND ME AND HILDY IT WAS
NATURAL THAT WE DRIFTED APART.

AT FIRST WE MADE AN EFFORT.
A FEW TIMES A MONTH WE'D GET
TOGETHER FOR SOME DRINKS -- BOYS'
NIGHT OUT. AFTER AWHILE, THOUGH,
ALL HE WOULD DO IS COMPLAIN,
ABOUT HIS JOB, ABOUT HIS WRITING
(OR LACK THEREOF) BUT MOSTLY
ABOUT DOROTHY.



I SAW HER A FEW TIMES
OVER THE YEARS, ON THE RARE AND
AWKWARD DOUBLE DATES WE TRIED.
MY IMPRESSION IS THAT SHE WAS
AS UNHAPPY AS HE WAS.

HER CAREER HAD BEEN GOING
WELL FOR AWHILE, AND SHE GOT A
PRIMO JOB WRITING FOR A NATIONAL
MAGAZINE OR SOMESUCH, WHEN SHE
JUST SORT OF... STALLED OUT.



NOT ONLY DID SHE LOSE THE
NATIONAL GIG, SHE HAD TROUBLE
GETTING ANY WRITING JOBS.



AS FOR SHERMAN'S WRITING .

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT HE FINALLY GOT OUT OF THE BOOKSTORE. WHEN THE GIANT CHAIN STORES STARTED POPPING UP ON EVERY CORNER, A DINOSAUR LIKE MATTHEW'S BOOK EMPORIUM JUST COULDN'T COMPETE. I THINK THEY TURNED IT INTO A GAP... OR WAS IT A STARBUCKS?

SHERMAN, NATURALLY, GOT A NEW JOB. HE BECAME A CLERK AT THAT BIG "MUSICZAR" SUPERSTORE THEY OPENED IN UNION SQUARE.

AT FIRST I LIKED THE IDEA, SINCE IT MEANT I COULD GET HIS DISCOUNT TO BUY MOVIES AND JUNK BUT THE FUNNY THING: I NEVER TOOK HIM UP ON IT.

MOST FRIENDSHIPS, IF THEY END AT ALL, END NOT BY EARTHQUAKE, BUT BY EROSION.

YOUR TIME TOGETHER, WHICH YOU USED TO TAKE FOR GRANTED, BECOMES SOMETHING YOU NEED TO SCHEDULE.

SLOWLY YOU'RE AWARE THAT THE EASY INTIMACY YOU SHARED GOT LOST SOMEWHERE.

YOU TALK MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE PAST.

ONCE SHERMAN BECAME AN ASSISTANT MANAGER AND STARTED WORKING FIFTY PLUS HOURS A WEEK... THAT WAS MORE OR LESS THE END OF IT.

THE END OF US.



JANE, NATURALLY, BLAMES ALL OF SHERMAN'S TROUBLES ON HER, BUT AS MUCH AS I'M NOT EXACTLY CO-CHAIR OF THE DOROTHY LESTRADE FAN CLUB, IT ISN'T FAIR TO LAY IT ALL ON HER FEET

SHERMAN'S A BIG BOY AND COULD WALK OUT ANYTIME HE WANTS TO. BUT FOR ALL HIS COMPLAINING, I GUESS HE REALLY DOESN'T WANT TO.



WE INVITED HIM TO THE WEDDING BUT THEY COULDN'T MAKE IT



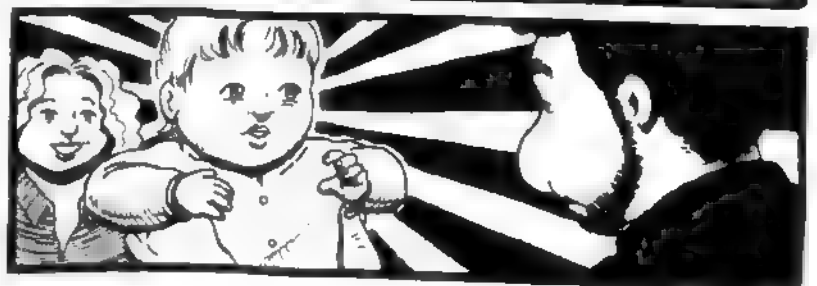
THANKS TO MY HUGE FAMILY, HILDY AND I HAD A PRETTY BIG WEDDING (WELL, NOT LIKE A KENNEDY WEDDING OR ANYTHING, BUT BIGGER THAN YOU'D EXPECT MY WEDDING TO BE ANYWAY).

WE'D BEEN LIVING TOGETHER FOR TWO YEARS BY THEN, SO IT WASN'T THAT BIG OF A DEAL



THE BIG DEAL ARRIVED SIX MONTHS LATER: THE ARRIVAL OF THE FRUIT OF OUR LOINS, THE LITTLE BUNDLE OF JOY:

KIRBY ROSE VELASQUEZ.

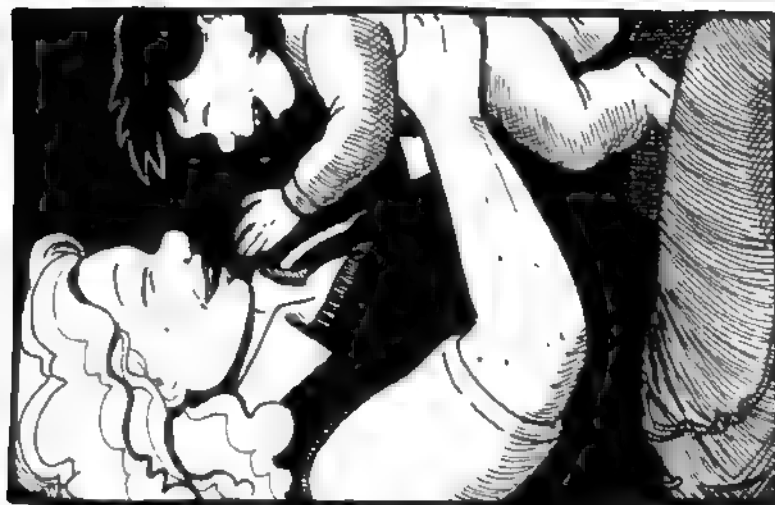




SHE'S FOUR YEARS OLD NOW AND HER YOUNGER SISTER, MARLYS, JUST TURNED TWO.

I KNOW. CAN YOU BELIEVE SUCH THINGS?

I COULD GO ON AND ON ABOUT HOW CRAZY I AM ABOUT THEM, AND HOW EVEN THOUGH I WASN'T SURE I WANTED KIDS YET THESE TWO GIRLS HAVE ENRICHED MY LIFE IN WAYS I NEVER EVEN IMAGINED. YOU SHOULD SEE THEM! THE WAY MARLYS WILL...

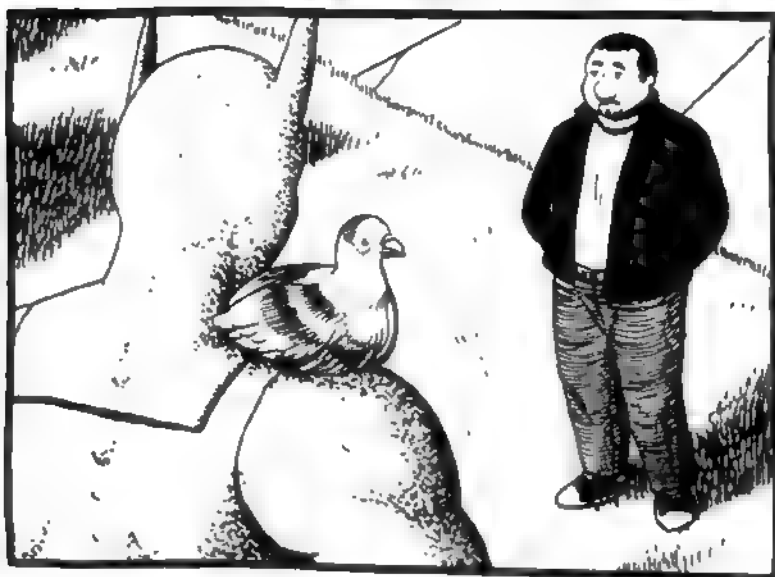


LIKE I SAID, I COULD GO ON AND ON BUT I WON'T BECAUSE UNLIKE MOST PARENTS, I REALIZE THAT NOTHING IS AS BORING AS HEARING ABOUT HOW GREAT AND TERRIFIC SOMEONE ELSE'S KIDS ARE.

OF COURSE MY KIDS ARE THE GREATEST AND MOST TERRIFICEST, BUT I'LL LET IT DROP.



YEAH, SEEING JANE MADE ME THINK ABOUT THE OLD DAYS AND ESPECIALLY THAT POOR, WONDERFUL BASTARD, IRVING FLAVOR.



IRONICALLY, HE ALWAYS HATED THE "TROUBLEMAKERS" WHO ROCKED THE BOAT OF THE COMICS INDUSTRY. BUT IT WAS BECAUSE OF THEM THAT CONTRACTS LIKE THE ONE HE SIGNED IN 1944 ARE PRETTY MUCH EXTINCT IN THE INDUSTRY.

SO WHEN HE GAVE J.C. LEBLANC METEON AND THE COMET KID THEY BECAME THE PROPERTY OF ZOOM COMICS, BUT FLAVOR STILL GOT A PIECE OF THE ACTION. IT WAS A SMALL PERCENTAGE, BUT IT WAS A ROYALTY NONETHELESS.

ANYTIME THEY MADE A METEON COMIC BOOK OR BED SPREAD OR TOOTH BRUSH OR CANDY BAR OR ACTION FIGURE OR VIDEO GAME OR SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON OR WHATEVER, ANYWHERE ON EARTH, MR. FLAVOR WOULD GET A CUT, TIL THE DAY HE DIED

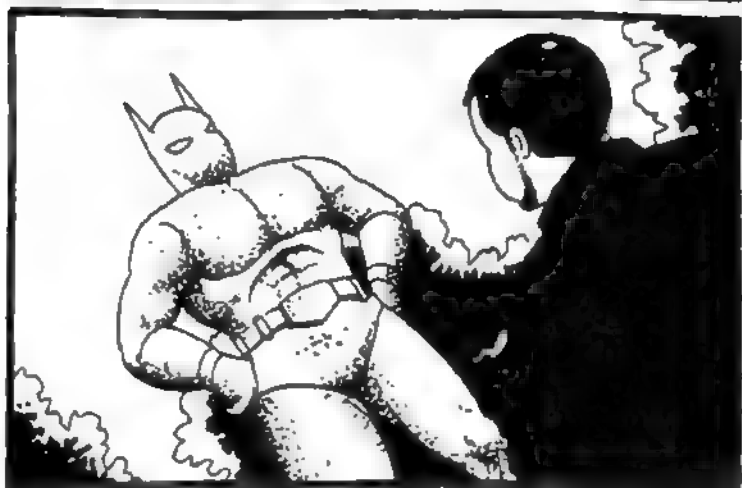
AFTER HE DIED, SAID CUT IS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO, AND PAID TO, MR. ED VELASQUEZ "AS A PAYMENT OF THANKS FOR HIS SIX MONTHS OF LOYAL SERVICE AS MY ASSISTANT."



IT WASN'T A HUGE SUM. LET'S FACE IT, METEON ISN'T A HOUSEHOLD NAME. BUT IT HELPED US PAY A FEW BILLS AND GET SET UP FOR KIRBY.

WE WERE HAPPY AT THIS UNEXPECTED LITTLE WINDFALL.

UNTIL...





ZOOM COMICS WAS FACING SOME FINANCIAL HARD TIMES, SO IT STARTED LEASING OUT SOME OF ITS CHARACTERS TO PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING. THEY DIDN'T WANT TO LEND OUT ANY OF THEIR BIG GUNS AT FIRST, SO GUESS WHO WAS AMONG THE FIRST BATCH OF HEROES TO COME TO LIFE IN THE RING?

THE "WRESTLING MONEY" TURNED THE QUARTERLY ZOOM ROYALTY CHECKS FROM A FEW EXTRA VIDEO RENTALS AND MOON-PIES INTO A TRULY LIFE ALTERING CHUNK OF CHANGE.

I'M SURE THERE'S SOME KIND OF IRONY OR POETIC JUSTICE OR WHAT HAVE YOU TO THE FACT THAT I'M USING MONEY FROM THE LARGEST COMICS PUBLISHER IN NORTH AMERICA AND PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING TO SUBSIDIZE MY OWN PUBLISHING EFFORT.



THE FIRST ISSUE OF "STAR-RAIDERS" CAME OUT ABOUT A YEAR AGO, AND IT'S BEEN DOING RELATIVELY WELL. OF COURSE THESE DAYS, THAT MEANS IT'S JUST NOT LOSING AS MUCH MONEY AS MOST SMALL PRESS BOOKS.



BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? IT DOESN'T MATTER. I'VE GOT HILDY AND THE GIRLS, I'VE GOT MY OWN COMIC BOOK... I'M LIVING THE LIFE I DREAMED OF.

BESIDES, I HEARD THE ADVANCE ORDERS FOR THE "METEON" VIDEO GAME ARE HUGE!



I'd like to express gratitude to my
cartooning friends Ivan Brunetti,
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fine drawings to the original *Box
Office Poison* series.
Please buy their comics.

Thanks to Chris and Brett
for risking all that they have worked
for by publishing this book.
Please buy other Top Shelf books.
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friendship and camaraderie.
Please buy his comic *Double Cross*.
Finally, eternal thanks to Kristen
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made this book possible.



Alex Robinson graduated from Yorktown High School in 1987. He worked at a major metropolitan bookstore for seven years before quitting to pursue comics full time. Currently living in New York City with his girlfriend and two cats, he is hard at work on his second book, which will definitely be shorter than this one. Please check out his website at <http://members.aol.com/BOPalex>





Alex Robinson's completely natural and inspiring knack for dialogue has made his story of dreary jobs, comic books, love, sex, messy apartments, girlfriends (and/or lack thereof), undisclosed pasts, and crusty old professionals one of the most delightful and whimsical books to hit the stands in years.

"Compellingly voyeuristic.

This is what it would be like to see your friends behind closed doors."

—Beth Hannan
Rimmels, *Long Island Voice*



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